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DENMARK AND ITS PEOPLE.

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DENMARK AND ITS PEOPLE.

INTRODUCTION.

I AM going to refer my readers to the 10th of March, 1863; a day that, I am sure, they will recall with pleasure; a day that shone upon a nation's freewill offering of love and gratitude to her rulers; a day on which Great Britain rejoiced with heart and voice; I need hardly add that I refer to the day of the happy union between the Princess Alexandra of Denmark and our own royal Albert Edward, Prince of Wales.

On this joyful occasion, the inhabitants of the little town of Elmton had determined not to be behind their neighbours in giving vent to their loyal and patriotic feelings; and right well did they keep their resolution.

With the first dawn of daylight the whole town seemed to be astir; and the sun rose—not upon the usual dull line of smoke-stained brick and stucco—but upon a mass of evergreens and flowers, plumes, streamers, and bunting, such as

Elmton had never displayed before within the memory of living man. From the cottage of the poor old bedridden widow at one end of the town to the squire's house at the opposite end, there was not a single dwelling in the long street, of which the town of Elmton consists, that did not show something in the way of decoration. Even the blackened rows of elm-trees, from which the town derives its name, had been roused from their winter slumbers to have their bare arms covered with festoons, garlands, and banners.

“I'll tell you what, my friends,” was the testimony of the old sexton, as he passed up the street to open the church for the first merry peal ; —“ there has not been a prince or princess born, married, or died, these sixty years, but I've rung him in and out,—but in all my days I never saw a sight like this before.”

And now, reader, if you think I am going to give you a minute description of all that Elmton did, and said, and thought on that happy day, I am afraid you will be disappointed. Suffice it to say, that—At eleven o'clock, a large congregation assembled in the fine old parish church, to thank God for His mercies to our nation, and to seek His blessing upon our young prince and princess.

At one, half the inhabitants of our little town were feasted by the remaining half.

The afternoon was spent in a variety of games,

which seemed to afford equal pleasure to rich and poor.

As the evening closed in, the town was paraded by a torchlight procession of volunteers, headed by their band.

And our rejoicings were carried far into the night by means of a general illumination.

It was the first time that Elmton had ever produced a gas star, and the admiration of the crowd at it was great. But higher still rose the applause when the torchlight procession came to the end of its round, and each man threw his still burning torch on the monster heap that had been prepared for the Elmton bonfire. Then, as the flames leaped, and crackled, and blazed, hurrah after hurrah rent the air, and it was not till a whole load of stubble and three hundred faggots had been well-nigh consumed, that the bandmaster could find the opportunity of a momentary lull, in which to lead off the well-known strain that never fails to stir the hearts of Englishmen. "Hats off" was now the cry ; and soon, the bandmaster, with admirable tact, moving gently forward, contrived to draw the crowd after him—till, at length, the smouldering embers of the bonfire and the darkened High Street of Elmton were left to repose.

And now, reader, I will confide to you, that my greatest enjoyment during the day had consisted

in watching the gambols of a merry group of lads, easily distinguished from their fellows by their white and red rosettes. These lads were my night-scholars; and I took praise to myself, I assure you, for having provided them with the true Danish colours, whereas the inhabitants of Elmtou generally had contented themselves with plain white, or with white relieved by the prince's plume in blue.

There was no doubt in my mind as to how the lads had enjoyed themselves; but next evening, when I saw the eyes of one and another beginning to droop over the reading-books, I brought the lesson to a close somewhat earlier than usual, and led the way to a few minutes' conversation by the remark,—“I hope you all spent a pleasant day yesterday.”

It is not often that night-school boys venture to say much before their teachers, and I had expected that my little speech would have been answered shortly and shyly; but instead of this, I found that it called forth a chorus of voices, and that every scholar had his own exploit or story to tell. Will Jones, the sand-boy, had gained the bridle in the donkey race. Ned Heavyside had climbed to within a foot of the leg of mutton at the top of the pole. Joe Sharp had all but carried off the pig with the greased tail. And poor little Charlie Short had spoilt his

favour, not to speak of his best jacket, by jumping for the treacled rolls.

All this and much more I heard ; and then our conversation came to a pause, and I observed one lad nudging another, till the sign had passed round to Tom Rule, the carpenter's apprentice, who was generally made the spokesman on any important occasion. Tom cleared his voice, stood up in his place, performed one of his old day-school bows, and then came out with—"Please, ma'am, we should be so much obliged to you if you would tell us something about the Princess Alexandra's country." To this I could not do less than answer, "I shall be happy to do the best I can for you, my boys. I have never been to Denmark ; but perhaps I may have had the opportunity of hearing more travellers' stories and of reading more books upon the subject than you have : it will give me much pleasure to put together what I know about Denmark for your benefit, and I think I can promise to give you a few short lectures upon it."

It was according to this promise that, after our usual lessons were finished on the next night-school evening, I took my class up to the map of Europe that was hanging upon the schoolroom wall, and spoke to them in words something like the following :—

CHAPTER I.

DENMARK IN GENERAL, AND HOLSTEIN IN PARTICULAR.

“ I AM not going to give you a geography lesson to-night, my boys ; but you will be able to understand what I have to tell you about Denmark all the better, if you notice first what the map can teach you upon the subject. Here is Denmark ; to the north of Germany, and to the south of Sweden and Norway. It has the North Sea on its western side, the Baltic Sea on its eastern, and the strait that joins the two seas runs by its northern coast.

“ In size and shape it bears some little resemblance to Scotland. Let us for a moment compare the two countries. Each is washed by the sea on three sides. Each has numerous islands belonging to it. Denmark has a slight advantage in position, being about one degree more to the south than Scotland. On the other hand, Scotland has the advantage in size, being about one-third larger than Denmark. I will add what the map does not tell you, that, in proportion to its

size, Denmark is as well peopled as Scotland: the population of Scotland being a little over three millions, and that of Denmark, including Holstein, rather more than two millions and a quarter. In one respect the two countries we are comparing are very different: Scotland being, as you know, a land of mountains, and hills, and running streams; while Denmark is generally flat, and has but one river of note—the Eyder, which has given its name to eider-ducks and eider-down.

“The Danish dominions in Europe are divided, as you may see by the map, into four provinces.

I. “The islands, one of which contains Copenhagen, the capital.

II. “Jutland, the most northern part of the mainland.

III. “Sleswig, or South Jutland.

IV. “And the Duchies of Holstein and Lauenburg, to the south of Sleswig.

“Besides these European provinces, Denmark possesses the islands of St. Thomas and St. Cross in the West Indies; the Faroe Islands to the north of Scotland; and her two ancient colonies of Iceland and Greenland on the borders of the Arctic Ocean.

“Holstein, although it is now, and has been for many ages, governed by the same ruler as Denmark, is not properly speaking a part of the

Danish *kingdom*. It is rather a German duchy, held by the king of Denmark in the same way that Hanover was held for several generations by the kings of England. It is possible that, as Hanover was separated from England at the accession of Queen Victoria, so Holstein may some day be separated from Denmark. The people of the duchy generally seem to prefer being considered as Germans rather than Danes, and as they are Germans by descent and Germans in language, they have some reason for their preference.

“Lauenburg is a small German duchy, lying to the south of Holstein. It is held by the King of Denmark upon the same terms as the larger duchy.

“And now that I have given you some general idea of the Danish kingdom, let me go on to remind you of the reasons which should lead us to take a more than ordinary interest in Denmark and its people. First among these, of course, is the connection that now so happily exists between the royal families of Denmark and England—may it be long continued. But besides this, there is an earlier connection, or I may say relationship, between the *people* of Denmark and England, that neither of them need wish to forget.

“I will try and explain this to you a little further.

“Just as England is now sending out colonists to Australia, so, once upon a time, Denmark sent out colonists to England. And as the English people of some generations hence will be related to the Australians of their own time, so are we related to the Danes of the present day.

“There were three separate times in our history when Danes came over to settle in England. First, about fourteen hundred years ago, came the people whom our histories generally call Saxons. But the writers of early times tell us that the so-called Saxons consisted of many different tribes, among which they particularly mention the Jutes, Angles, and Frisians. Now the Jutes, Angles, and Frisians are all supposed to have come from Denmark; and, moreover, the untravelled part of their descendants are living there to this very day. The name Jutland speaks for itself, as being the land of the Jutes; the inhabitants of a part of the west, or North Sea coast of Denmark are still called Frisians; while Angeln, the country of the Angles, is found on the Baltic coast of Sleswig.

“Then, as to the second invasion of the Danes; you know that our king Alfred fought against them and conquered them, and that he afterwards allowed as many of them as chose, to settle in England, upon condition of their becoming Christians.”

“O yes, we read about that the other night,” Joe Sharp exclaimed here; “and when the Danish prince was baptized, Alfred stood as his godfather.”

“And, please, ma’am,” added Charlie Short, “was not that a Dane who put his chair by the sea-side, and told the waters not to come on any further?”

“Yes,” I answered; “Canute was king of Denmark and of England too; for the Saxon kings who reigned after Alfred were not such good soldiers as he was, and the Danes took advantage of this to come over in larger and larger bands, till at last they succeeded in making themselves masters of the country. Three Danish kings reigned in England one after another, namely, Canute, Harold, and Hardicanute; but when the last of these died without children, in the year 1042, the English crown went back to the old Saxon line.

“And now for the third invasion of our country by a Danish race. This took place in the year 1066, when Duke William and his Normans landed in England. They came, it is true, from Normandy, in France; but their ancestors a few generations before, had left Denmark in search of a new country, and had settled in France, where their leader, Rollo, founded the dukedom of Normandy. So you see that William

the Conqueror and his followers were Danish by descent, if not by actual birth ; and that we, whether we claim our descent from the old Angles or from the more courtly Normans, can scarcely fail to have some mixture of Danish blood in our veins. Possibly it is to this part of his descent that the Englishman of the present day owes his bravery and enterprise, while the German or Saxon part of his nature supplies him with industry and perseverance.

“As I speak to you of each part of Denmark in turn, I shall be able to call your attention to many things in which Danes and Englishmen still resemble each other ; but perhaps some of you may like to be told at once that the Danish language is said to be very much like the dialect of the Yorkshireman. The ancient relationship between the two countries is also marked by the number of surnames that are common to both. I might give you a long list of them, but for the present I will only mention a few. Bass, meaning wild boar ; Beck, a little stream ; Brand, fire ; Bigg, Danish for a buck ; Grubb, Swain, Winter, Johnson, Thomson, and most of our other names ending in ‘son,’ are among the number. Havelock, also, is a well-known name in Denmark. A very popular ballad recounts the deeds of a Danish Havelock of bygone days, and it seems that during the late Indian mutiny, the

brave acts of our Sir Henry Havelock were as much thought of in Denmark as in England ; the Danes quite took him to themselves, and when the news of his death arrived, they mourned over his loss as if he had been their own countryman.

“ And now, as I want you to accompany me in a little tour through Denmark, let us go and see how we can get there from England. The easiest way will be to take our passage in a steamer bound for Hamburg. Supposing we start from London, we may expect to be four or five hours longer upon the sea than we should be if we were steaming from London to Edinburgh ; about forty-eight hours, I believe, would be reckoned an average passage for the longer voyage. Hamburg, where we are landed, is in Germany, not in Denmark, but as we steam up the Elbe in going there, we have the coast of Holstein, which, as I have told you, belongs to Denmark, on our left hand all the way ; Altona even, which looks like a suburb of Hamburg, and which you might suppose to belong to it, being within the Holstein boundary.

“ But, as it is not fair to judge of a country from the inhabitants of its border towns, we will not stop at Altona, but hasten on a little further into the country, which we can do by means of the railroad that runs from Altona, across the peninsula, to Kiel, on the shores of the Baltic.

“The first part of our journey is not very interesting, for we have to pass over a large sandy heath, only varied by an occasional peat-moss. Not a tree is to be seen anywhere, and scarcely a house, yet there must be a few villages somewhere at hand, since we now and then come upon a party of men cutting peat for their winter fuel, or spy out a small flock of sheep browsing upon the scanty herbage. Still the barren heath is all around us, and we begin to think that Denmark is one of the poorest countries we have ever seen. But don't judge too hastily, my friends ; there are desolate moors in England too, and yet we know that our country is by no means on the whole a sandy waste. Besides the barren district in Holstein through which we are passing, there is indeed a similar strip of uncultivated moorland and bleak peat-moss which runs up the centre of the peninsula, from Holstein in the south, to Jutland in the north. But, notwithstanding all this, we shall not find the whole country a desert.

“See, as we draw near the shores of the Baltic, how the scene changes ! Now we might almost fancy ourselves back again in old England. We have passed from the moorland into ‘a country of small fields, enclosed by hedges, and rising into gentle elevations of ground cultivated to the summits, or crowned with groves of magnificent

beech, elm, oak, and lime-trees (none of the fir tribe are to be seen) ; and in the bottoms in which the slopes meet is generally a small quiet lake, reflecting the peasant's house on the bank ; or a peat-moss, evidently once a lake, on which the farmer is mowing the bog hay, or cutting peats for his winter fuel. The slopes and summits of these gentle elevations appear to be of excellent soil, for they are carrying heavy crops of rye, wheat, barley, oats, and buckwheat, pease, rape, and sown grasses. . . . The husbandry, implements, horses, cattle, are very like those of the Anglo-Saxon districts of the south of England, such as Kent and Surrey.*

“And here we are, by the side of the Baltic, or rather, by the side of one of its inlets, the Bay of Kiel. How pleasant its blue waters look, sparkling in the sunshine ! And they must be deep, too, for there are some large vessels moored close to the town. In fact, Kiel possesses the finest harbour on the south side of the Baltic. It affords admirable shelter for shipping, and has depth and size enough to accommodate the largest fleets.

“The town is well situated for commerce, being built upon a point of land that juts out into the water. . It is a pleasant, lively place, with about

* ‘Observations on the Social and Political State of Denmark and the Duchies,’ By S. Laing, Esq.

fourteen thousand inhabitants. It contains a university, two large hospitals, an orphan asylum, a house of refuge for aged men, several churches, and other public buildings ; but none of them are remarkable for the beauty of their architecture.

“The houses of the town are mostly built of red brick, for there is very little stone to be found in the neighbourhood ; but the bricks are laid in patterns, and set in a frame-work of wooden panelling, like some of the old houses in England. However, the wooden beams are painted black, and varnished—which we don’t see in England—and the tiled roofs are made much higher than ours, in order to throw off the winter snow, which is much heavier in Holstein and Denmark than it is with us. Then the gables are finished off with a zigzag line for ornament, and there are more windows than are commonly seen in English buildings.

“If we enter one of the houses in Kiel, we shall most probably find it comfortably furnished and beautifully clean ; cleanliness being a virtue that is generally practised throughout Holstein and the other Danish provinces.

“One of the Kiel churches formerly contained the famous Danish banner, the Danebrog, of which I dare say you have heard. The story goes, that one day, as king Waldemar the Victorious (the husband of the good Queen Dagmar),

was fighting against some heathens who lived on the shores of the Baltic, his troops lost their standard, and were nearly overcome by their pagan foes, when Waldemar cast his eyes towards heaven, and beheld a banner descending towards him through the air. It was a white cross on a red ground. At the moment the king caught it he seemed to hear a voice from heaven, saying to him, 'In this thou shalt conquer!' And then the tide of victory turned, the Danes rallied round their sacred banner, and the pagans were utterly routed. Upon returning from the expedition (it was in the year 1219), the banner was hung up in St. Mary's Church at Kiel, never to be taken down, save in cases of the greatest need. But in the year 1550 it was carried before the Danish troops in a battle against the inhabitants of Ditmarsh, and was lost, all but one rag; and that has since disappeared. Thus was Kiel shorn of its greatest glory; but the inhabitants of Denmark still use, as their national flag, a copy of the sacred banner—a white cross on a red ground.

"At the end of the town of Kiel is a large square schloss, or castle, the gardens of which are open to the public, and contain some beautiful avenues of trees, extending along the shores of the Baltic. Passing onwards, we come upon a wood, and 'nothing,' says one traveller, 'can be

more beautiful, more cool, than these beechen woods of the Holstein duchies; unlike any you meet with in other countries. You must not confuse the woods with the forests: the latter abound in game; the woods, on the contrary, are cleared of all underwood, the branches lopped off, leaving a thick canopy of verdure above, and a free circulation of air below. Beneath they are one carpet of moss, from which spring the roots of the lily of the valley, the Solomon's-seal, hepatica, and other wild flowers in abundance; the dormouse, squirrel, and the stoat abound, and the larger falcon tribe; of smaller birds I have seen but few.*

“The notes of the cuckoo, however, ring through the Danish woods in spring time, as they would in England, and the cunning trespasser follows her usual custom of laying her eggs in her neighbour's nest. Perhaps you would like to know how the people of Denmark account for this fact. ‘When in early spring time,’ they say, ‘the voice of the cuckoo is first heard in the woods, every village girl kisses her hand, and asks the question, “Cuckoo, cuckoo, when shall I be married?” and the old folks, borne down with

* ‘A Residence in Jutland, the Danish Isles, and Copenhagen.’ By Horace Marryat. Woods, such as the author here describes, are termed *groves* in some parts of this country.

age and rheumatism, inquire, "Cuckoo, when shall I be released from this world's cares?" The bird, in answer, continues singing "Cuckoo!" as many times as years will elapse before the object of their desires will come to pass. But as some old people live to an advanced age, and many girls die old maids, the poor bird has so much to do in answering the questions put to her, that the building season goes by; she has no time to make her nest, but lays her eggs in that of the hedge-sparrow.'

"But to return to the Kiel wood. Part of it has been laid out in tea-gardens, skittle-grounds, and other places of amusement, where, in summer evenings, almost the whole population of the town may be found; rich and poor mixing freely together, sipping their coffee under the shade of the same trees, and listening with equal pleasure to the band of music that enlivens the gardens. This love of social amusement extends throughout Holstein and Denmark; in summer, the tea-gardens are the great attraction, and in winter, every town and village has its choral union, and its company of amateur actors.

"Perhaps I ought to add, that the profession of an actor is thought much more highly of in Denmark than it is in England: it is not uncommon, I believe, for respectable young men, educated for doctors, lawyers, &c., to try their

talents on the stage for a season, and if they should prove unsuccessful there, to return to their earlier professions without any loss of character.

“But I think our lecture has been long enough for to-night, so we will leave the townspeople for the present, and next week I shall have something to tell you about the villagers.”

“Oh, thank you, ma’am,” exclaimed Charlie Short; “we should like to know what the farm boys do.”

“And what sort of houses they live in,” added Tom Rule, the carpenter.

“And what they get to eat,” put in Ned Heavyside.

CHAPTER II.

FARMING IN DENMARK.

NEXT week my scholars were all at school in good time, and when they had finished their reading, writing, and arithmetic, I gathered them round the stove, that they might sit comfortably while I told them about farming in Denmark.

“Denmark,” I said, “is a country of dairy and cattle farms. Some of these are very large, consisting of a thousand acres and upwards, and keeping two, three, or even four hundred cows. Let us take one of these farms as a specimen of the rest.

“When you go to visit the farmer, you drive in through folding-gates, not to a farmyard, but to a nicely-kept courtyard, with a centre of grass, bordered by a row of lime-trees, and a gravelled road all round. Of course your entrance brings out the watch-dog, whose kennel is placed on a bit of stone pavement in the middle of the grass. As soon as he will let you look around, you see that the farmer’s house, a large handsome brick building, is in front of you; on each side of the

folding-gates are smaller buildings, used as offices and for lodging the farm-servants, and on the other two sides of the courtyard are enormous barns.

"I must tell you that in the Danish fields there are no stacks of hay or corn to be seen. It is thought that the wet and cold of winter would damage them; so the farmers' barns have to be built large enough to hold, not only the cattle, but also every sheaf of corn and every load of hay that is grown upon the land."

"They must be large!" put in Ned Heavyside.

"Yes," I went on, "they are indeed. I have read of one which was a hundred and ninety-two feet long, and seventy-two wide, and I believe it was not at all of an uncommon size. It held two hundred cows, and above the stable was a loft, which stored all their winter fodder. It was built of brick, and whitewashed, and its high-pitched roof was thatched very thickly with rye-straw. It was so high that when the corn was brought home it took fourteen men, standing one above another, to pitch the sheaves from the waggon to the top of the loft."

"I should like to have seen that!" exclaimed Will Jones.

"I would rather help to make a good rick, though, than have to pitch the sheaves up into the barn," added Charlie Short.

“On the smaller farms,” I continued, “the buildings are arranged differently from those I have just described. You come upon what looks like an enormous house, with a lofty archway in the gable-end. The doors that close this are opened, you drive your carriage or waggon into the house, and find yourself in a large hall that extends the whole length of the building, and is broad enough for two waggons to pass. At the extreme end there is either another gateway, or else ‘a large open fireplace, ranged with bright pewter plates and china, and good shining copper pots and kettles, rivalling a Holland interior in their brightness.’”*

“That must be a queer sort of a house!” cried all the boys in chorus.

“Please, ma’am, do they really drive into the house?” added Ned Heavyside.

“Yes,” I replied; “waggon and horses too are brought into the great hall, which is certainly not as it would be in England; but you must remember that the winter is much more severe in Denmark than it is with us. The Danish farmer is a man who likes to make himself comfortable; he does not fancy turning out of a winter’s night to look after his horse or his cows, so he contrives to house all his belongings under his own roof. Those doors that you see on one side of

* Marryat’s ‘Jutland and the Danish Isles.’

the hall, open into the stable and cow-house, while those on the other side lead into the farmer's rooms. The waggon is left standing in the hall."

"I should not like to live in the same house with the cows!" exclaimed Tom Rule.

"No," I answered; "it might not be very pleasant to live too near an English cow-shed, but the Danish cow-houses and stables are kept so clean that the great hall is quite wholesome and sweet. The loft above the whole building is used as a barn, so the farmer's rooms are all on the ground-floor, but there are plenty of them, and they are as well furnished as they would be in England. There is a stove for burning wood or peat in each room, for coals and open fireplaces are not much used. The windows are shaded by pretty muslin curtains, and ornamented with rows of flowers in pots, just as they would be with us.

"These farm-houses are all built of brick, set in a framework of wood, and are mostly white-washed, and the beams picked out with black paint. The labourers' cottages are generally made of clay plastered on wattles, and their roofs are thatched very thickly with rushes or with rye-straw.

"Denmark is a capital poor man's country. It grows more corn and cattle than it can consume, so food is very cheap, and there is enough

for all. A beggar or a man out of work is scarcely ever to be met with."

"Oh, that is a good thing!" put in Joe Sharp, whose father had been out of work all the winter.

"There are two sides to everything," I replied. "Although the Danish labourer always has work, he has to do it for much less pay than the Englishman. How do you think your fathers would like to work for threepence-halfpenny a day in the winter, and fivepence-farthing in the summer? That is the common pay of a Danish labourer; and his wife gets from twopence to fourpence-farthing a day, according to the season. But, then, I must tell you that, besides their pay, these labourers have allowances that make up for their want of money.

"Most of the married men have a holding of three or four acres of land with their cottage, and are allowed by their masters peat for fuel, and winter fodder for a cow. In return for these privileges they either pay a small rent or, more commonly, give their work for a certain number of days on the farm. Their rate of pay and hours of work are fixed by law, and they generally hold their house and field from the owner of the land, coupled with an agreement to work on his farm, so that the tenant-farmer has no power to turn them off, or to lessen their pay. They

all keep a cow and a pig, and generally a goat or two besides. These last are tethered by the wayside, and watched and brought home for milking by the children.

“The working-hours in summer are from six to six, and the men cannot be forced to work later against their will; indeed, the farmers complain that even in hay and harvest time they cannot get anything done after six o’clock, although they would willingly pay extra wages: the men excuse themselves by saying, they have their own fields to attend to.

“The unmarried servants generally live in the farmhouse, and get from three pounds to four pounds ten shillings a year, besides their board. I dare say you would like to know how they are fed. A traveller who made many inquiries into this subject gives us the following account of the food supplied to the house-servants on one of the large farms in Denmark:—

“‘Every morning, thin soup made with butter-milk and groats. The groats are of barley (pot-barley), or of buckwheat, which is much cultivated in Holstein for soups and pottage. Every evening, thick pottage and milk. Bread, the black, unsifted rye-bread of the country, is at discretion at these morning and evening meals, and at all the other meals.

“‘On Sunday the dinner is a soup made from

lard, with dumplings and roots—namely, potatoes—or with pears in it.

“ ‘On Monday, the rest of the soup of Sunday, with dumplings, and mashed potatoes in lard-sauce.

“ ‘On Tuesday, barley boiled in milk, with bacon in summer, and in winter with salt meat, and mashed potatoes, or cabbage, beans, carrots, according to the season.

“ ‘On Wednesday, thin pottage with sweet milk, and egg-pancakes with a piece of bacon to each pancake ; in winter, dumplings with meat sauce.

“ ‘On Thursday, pease-pudding, or yellow peas boiled, with bacon in winter, and in summer, soup as on Sunday.

“ ‘On Friday, pancakes, with soup or pottage ; in winter, often milk, pease-pudding, and in summer with thick milk.

“ ‘On Saturday, dumplings and milk, with cheese and a lump of butter, the pound being divided into fourteen lumps.

“ ‘Every man-servant is allowed besides three-quarters of a pound of butter per week. The women-servants receive no butter weekly, but, instead of it, three dollars (about 6s. 8d.) yearly as butter-money. Bread, as before stated, and small beer are at discretion.’ *

* Laing’s ‘Denmark.’

"This is different food to what you have, boys," I added: "there is plenty of it, but I don't think you would like to be fed upon black bread instead of white."

"I know I shouldn't," said Will Jones.

"And I would rather have water than butter-milk," put in Ned Heavyside.

"They don't give them too much meat," was the remark of another boy.

"Nor any tea, it seems," added a fourth.

"And what do you think of the pear-soup?" exclaimed Tom Rule.

"Every country has its different kinds of food," I continued; "and if you would not like butter-milk or pear-soup, the Dane would be just as dissatisfied with the bread and tea three times a day that I have known some English families live upon."

"But, then, ours is white bread," remarked Joe Sharp.

"Yes," I said; "but the black rye-bread, when it is well made, is sweet, and very wholesome and nourishing. It is used in a great many other countries besides Denmark, and I never heard that the peasants complain of it. On the contrary, many of us might take a lesson from the way in which the Danes treat their bread, looking upon it as the good gift of God. They say, 'We must not even lay the Bible upon

bread.' And when in Zealand a peasant drops a piece of bread, he takes it up quickly, and, kissing it, begs pardon of 'Our Lord' for having treated carelessly 'His good gift.' Many, too, are the stories related by the old as warnings to the children 'not to profane the blessed bread.'

" 'A young girl, in service near Flinterup, in Zealand, one day received permission to visit her aged mother, and her mistress gave her five loaves to take as a present. So the girl dressed herself as fine as a peafowl, and, coming where the road was impassable on account of the mud, to avoid dirtying her shoes, laid down the loaves as stepping-stones, in order to pass over dry-footed. But as she placed her feet upon the bread, the loaves sank deeper and deeper, till she entirely disappeared in the bog, and was seen no more. The girls of the village still sing a lay about 'the bad girl who trod upon bread to keep her shoes clean.' *

" In walking over a Danish farm, you would see some kinds of crops that we are not accustomed to in England, as tobacco, rye, and buck-wheat; on the other hand, you would miss the root crops, as turnips and mangolds; these are never sown in Denmark, as the winter weather is considered too severe for them. Perhaps it is from the want of them that the land gets very foul; we should say

* Marryat's 'Jutland and the Danish Isles.'

it belonged to a bad farmer, if it were in England; but notwithstanding the weeds, it is capable of bearing heavy crops of corn, thanks partly to the plentiful stock of manure with which it has been supplied, and partly to its naturally fertile soil. On the Baltic side it consists generally of a light sandy loam, with a subsoil of clay; on the North Sea coast there are tracts of rich loam which has been reclaimed from the sea. The centre of the country, as I have told you, is partly sandy waste, and partly peat-bog. The Danish farmer on the Baltic coast, in a good year, expects to gather in five quarters of wheat, six quarters of rye, six quarters of barley, or from six to seven quarters of oats per acre.

“ When his last sheaves have been piled upon the last harvest-cart, the labourers deck out the carts, the horses, and themselves, with garlands of leaves and flowers; and the women gather large nosegays, which they fasten to the end of long sticks; then they all mount the carts, and drive home with shouts and songs, after the manner of English labourers. When they reach the farmhouse, one of the men, who is specially dressed up for the occasion, approaches the farmer and his wife, sickle in hand, and exclaims—

“ ‘ We have cut the corn; it is ripe; it is gathered in. Now shall we cut the cabbages in the garden ?’

“ ‘No, thank you,’ answers the farmer; ‘I had rather you would not.’

“ ‘But we will,’ says the man; ‘the corn is gathered in; now we will cut the cabbages in the garden.’

“ ‘No,’ replies the master; ‘as the corn is ripened and gathered into the barn, we will give you a feast.’

“ With this promise the company appears to be satisfied; supper is served, and the evening passes over with as much merriment as is usual at an English harvest-home.

“ But while the Danish labourer is as fond of a feast as the Englishman, perhaps he is a little more inclined to take his work easily. ‘If you see a farm-waggon on the road,’ says Mr. Laing, ‘with its two horses, taking a load of hay or peat to market, you generally find the driver quietly mounted on the one, and a friend or neighbour on the other.’ ‘One practice in their husbandry,’ Mr. Laing continues, ‘I am at a loss to judge of—whether to consider it a saving of labour and fatigue to the labourer only, or a saving of labour—that is, of money—to the employer also. I saw it on a large farm, in a field in which sixteen horses were at work, harrowing. There were only four men working the sixteen horses. Two horses were in each harrow, and the harrows and all the equipment were of the same size and form

as with us, and the field was flat. The peculiarity was that the harrowing was circular, the harrows working round and round the driver. He stood in the centre, like a horse-breaker lounging a young horse, and, with the long reins in his hand, kept the one pair of horses and their harrows alongside of, but a little behind, the other pair and their harrows. When he had reduced the clods to his mind, he took up a new centre on a line with the old. This was certainly a saving of labour, or of the fatigue of walking up and down, lengthwise and crosswise, over the whole field. It appeared a saving of labour also for the employer. The practice of harrowing in a circle is universal in Holstein and Sleswick.*

“ Nearly all the large farms in Denmark and the Duchies belong to nobles, and up to the beginning of the present century were cultivated by their owners; but they are now generally let to tenants. When the landlord left off farming his own land, of course he had his stock of implements, cattle, seed-corn, &c., to dispose of, and he generally found it convenient to pass them over to the in-coming tenant, upon condition that he should give up stock of the same description and amount at the end of his lease. This kind of holding has descended from tenant to tenant, and is common in Denmark at the present day; so

* Laing's 'Denmark and the Duchies.'

that the young farmer there does not need any capital to stock his farm; his landlord provides him with everything that is necessary to work the land, and he has nothing to find but his men's wages, rates and taxes, and rent. The wages, as I have told you, are much lower than they would be in England; so are the rates and taxes, and the rent is equally moderate—it averages, I believe, about ten shillings an acre where the stock is found, and only about six shillings without stock."

"That must be a good country for the farmer," remarked Joe Sharp.

"And a bad one for the landlords," added Tom Rule.

"Yes," I replied, "I believe you are both right. When we remember the immense farm-buildings that the landlord has to keep up, we can see at once that he is not likely to grow very rich upon ten shillings an acre, whereas many of the farmers have become wealthy men.

"About one-half of the land in Denmark belongs to the nobles; the other half is held by small owners, who almost all farm their own land. These, like their brethren the tenant-farmers, generally do well. Mr. Laing tells us of a custom that prevails among them. 'It is,' he says, 'a peculiar trait in the social state and character of the peasant proprietor in Sleswick,

Jutland, and the Danish islands, that he always builds a house, if his forefathers have not done it for him, besides the main house of his farm, for himself to dwell in when he gets old ; and he retires in old age, and gives up the property to his son. This generally takes place when he is about sixty. He reserves for his subsistence a certain portion of the crops, to be delivered to him yearly, and a cow or two, with land or fodder to keep them, and gives up to his son or heir the house, farm, stock, and management.*

“ The Danish farmer generally depends for profit on his cattle, cows, and pigs. I dare say that at one time or another we have eaten some of his beef, for many shiploads of Danish cattle are sent to England every year ; others are salted down at home, and then sold to us as ‘ Hamburg beef.’ The pigs, too, either alive or dead, generally find their way to this side of the water, and help to supply our townspeople with pork and bacon.

“ The chief care of the Holstein farmer is spent upon his cows ; these are carefully fed and kindly treated, and in return are expected to give, on an average, milk that will yield 110 lbs. of butter, and 120 lbs. of cheese a year per cow. ‘ The butter, salted and packed on the farm in kegs made on the premises, is all sent to England.

* Laing’s ‘ Denmark.’

The cheese—skimmed-milk cheese—is sold for home consumption at Hamburg and Copenhagen.*

“As there are often from two hundred to four hundred cows on a farm, the dairy work is made quite a manufacture. One dairy-maid is kept for about sixteen or eighteen cows, and she has but a hard life of it, poor girl. Her wages are two pounds a year, and for that she is expected to be up at one o'clock every morning; however, I must add that she is allowed to get a little extra sleep in the middle of the day. She has to milk her cows, as well as to clean her share of the milk-pails, make the butter, &c.; but the churning is done for her by horse-power.

“Some of the farmers tether their cows in summer, and they say that they can keep eleven to their neighbours' ten by doing so; and that after the cows are accustomed to be tethered, they give more milk than when they roamed about at large. It would seem strange to us to see ‘a hundred or two of cows tethered in a line, with one or two men attending them, with mallets to drive the stakes into the ground, and shifting the whole line of cattle three times a-day.’† This is a sight that is often to be seen in Holstein.

“The Danish farmers are noted for their kind treatment of their cattle. One traveller tells us

* Laing's ‘Denmark.’

† Ibid.

that he remarked some upright stones in the pasture fields, and, asking what they were, was told that the farmer had put them there for his cattle to rub against.* Mr. Laing tells us, speaking of the war in which the Danes were engaged against the Germans from 1848 to 1850, 'At the siege of Fredericstadt, while thirty-two pieces of heavy artillery were pouring shot and shells incessantly into the little country town, which was deserted by the inhabitants, and on fire on all sides, the great subject of conversation and sympathy among the Danish soldiers of the little garrison was not their own killed or wounded, but the cattle, the poor cattle, left in the burning houses. One soldier was observed to steal across the street, while it was swept by the enemy's fire, and was found by his officer coolly dealing out provender to the deserted and hungry cattle of his landlord. He could not withstand their bellowing for food.'

"Mr. Marryat relates a custom which shows that the kind-hearted Dane does not confine his attention to his cows; he is speaking of Christmas, and says: 'The peasants here have a pretty tradition, that as the clock strikes twelve on Christmas-eve, the cattle all rise together, and stand straight upright in their stalls. On that

* A similar practice may be observed in some parts of England.

day, too, the cows in the stables, as well as the horses, are fed with the best of everything—hay, corn, and beans; and all is made tidy before four o'clock. As for the watch-dog, he fares better than anybody. The housewife goes into the courtyard, removes his chain, and, bringing him to the house, first cuts off from the long brown loaf a slice of bread, which she gives to him, saying, "Here's for my *huusbond*, and here's for me;" and next she cuts off one for each of the children, "Here's for Mette, and here's for Hans." When he has finished these slices, she gives him his rightful supper as well, adding, "Now, good dog, you shall run loose this night, for in a season when there is peace and good-will upon earth, you will surely harm no one." No-where is this good old custom of keeping Christmas kept up so pleasantly as in Jutland, where even the little birds are not forgotten, for a small wheat-sheaf is laid in the garden over-night on Christmas-eve, that they may also eat, be full, and rejoice.' " *

* Marryat's 'Jutland and the Danish Isles.'

CHAPTER III.

SLESWIG, OR SOUTH JUTLAND.

ON the third evening of my Lectures on Denmark, I had a full class again, and when the boys had seated themselves round the map, I spoke to them as follows:—

“ We are going to leave our farm-house to-day, and I should like you to take a trip with me northwards, through the duchy of Sleswig.* The post-house from which we shall have to start is in Kiel, so we must beg our good-natured host to drive us to the town in his *stuhlwagen*. What is that? you want to ask. Look, there it is! A long, narrow waggon, the sides filled in with bars only, not boards, and the planks at the bottom laid loosely down, not nailed; there are no springs, but the swing seats will lessen the jolting to some extent. It is not much like the smart dog-cart of an English farmer, is it? but it is the general carriage of the middle classes in Denmark.

* This word is spelt Schleswig by the Germans, and Slesvig by the Danes. Besides the spelling we have adopted, there is another English method of writing it, namely, Sleswick.

“The distance from Kiel to the town of Sleswig is rather more than thirty miles, and we can travel either by the diligence—a heavy, lumbering stage-coach—or with a post carriage and horses. The latter mode is likely to be the most comfortable, and although more expensive than the diligence, will only cost ninepence per mile; so we will fix upon it. Here comes the chaise, with a fine pair of bay horses that would not disgrace any gentleman’s private carriage.* But where can the postilion have picked up his scarlet jacket with its yellow facings? Surely it must be the cast-off coat of an English soldier. No; scarlet is the colour of the royal livery in Denmark as well as in England, and posting there is managed by the Government, which furnishes the postilions with their uniform.

“And now, crack, crack, goes the whip, and we move off gently, very gently, from the post-house at Kiel. Our carriage is good, the road is good, the horses excellent; we might certainly go a little faster, but the Danish post-boy has no idea of hurrying either himself or his cattle; he will take us along at five miles an hour, and he thinks we ought to be perfectly contented with his pace. At the end of about an hour and a half he drives us into the centre hall of a village *kro*, or inn, and tells us it is time that he should bait

* Denmark is famous for its horses

his horses. And what do you think he gives them? Not corn or hay, but some good thick slices of the landlady's rye bread. They like it quite as well, if not better, than corn, and it is more quickly eaten, so that in half an hour we are ready to drive out of the kro.

“Our next stoppage is in the little town of Eckernfiorde, beautifully situated on a fiord, or inlet, of the Baltic, and noted for its windmills. Here we change horses, and then on, on again, over the straight sandy road—shaded, however, by mountain ash-trees, and varied by an occasional beech wood—till we come in sight of the town of Sleswig, with its ancient palace of Gottorp rising tall and white and imposing in the centre of the town, the waters of the Sley (another fiord of the Baltic) glistening on our right, and on our left a background of royal forest.

“Sleswig was formerly the chief town of the duchy, but that glory has lately been taken from it, and transferred to Flensburg. It is not a handsome town, for it consists of but one long and very badly paved street, built round the head of the fiord, which is here twenty-five miles from the open sea. The palace is nearly in the centre of the town. It stands upon a little hill, which is surrounded by a bog; no uncommon site for a palace in Denmark.

“The principal curiosities in Sleswig are the

altar-piece in the Cathedral, and the Church of St. Michael's. The latter is an ancient round building, and is supposed by some people to be the first church that was built in Denmark. The Danes did not become Christians till long after the Britons and Anglo-Saxons. It was not till the ninth century that any great efforts were made to convert them; but about that time, St. Anscar, one of the noblest of the noble band of early Christian missionaries, crossed the Eyder. He is said to have made Sleswig his first halting-place on Danish soil, to have gathered there his first band of Danish converts, and to have built there the first Danish church, possibly the very St. Michael's that still exists.

“The altar-piece of Sleswig Cathedral is one of the most beautiful specimens of wood-carving in existence. It is twenty-six feet in width, fifty in height, and two in thickness, and represents twenty-two scenes from the life of our Saviour. It contains all together about four hundred separate figures; all the most prominent ones being highly finished, and some of them carved through the oak, to stand out as independent statues.

“The artist of this celebrated work, H. Brüggemann, expended seven years' labour upon it, and finished it in the year 1521, for his employers, the monks of Bordesholm. The story goes, that the people of Lubeck were so much pleased with

the altar-piece that they begged Brüggemann to carve one for them; whereupon the jealous monks of Bordesholm seized the artist, and put out his eyes, lest he should provide their rivals with a more beautiful work than the one they possessed.

“The greatest curiosity in the neighbourhood of Sleswig is the Danevirke, which passes a few miles south of the town. It is an earthen wall or rampart, somewhat like the Roman walls that were built in the north of our country to keep back the Picts. Its object was a similar one, namely, to defend the Danes against their enemies who lived beyond it. It is about ten miles in length, and completes a line of defence across the peninsula, by extending from the coast of the Sley (which you remember is an inlet of the Baltic) to a navigable branch of the river Eyder, which falls into the North Sea.

“The Danevirke is said to have been constructed by King Gorm the Old, or his Queen, Thyra, in the tenth century, and to have been strengthened with brickwork and towers by Waldemar the Victorious, in the thirteenth. Its last military use was in the Sleswig-Holstein war of 1848-50, when it was occupied by the Danish army, as the key to the country north of it.

“As I have more than once had occasion to refer to the war of 1848-50, and as its consequences

have been important to Denmark, I must try to give you some account of its origin.

“The duchy of Holstein has always been acknowledged to be a part of Germany. Its people speak German. Its dukes formerly held their possession under the Emperor of Germany, and, now there is no Emperor of Germany, they hold it subject to the rules of the German Federal Union; and that, although the Duke of Holstein is one and the same person as the King of Denmark. But the Germans speak one language, and the Danes another; the Germans have one code of laws, and the Danes another; so that the King of Denmark is put to the trouble and expense of conducting a double government for one small country. This is found to be very inconvenient, and one king after another has tried to do his best to remedy it. One attempted to introduce the Danish language into Holstein; another endeavoured to reconcile the German and Danish laws of succession to the throne; and lastly, a constitution was proposed which should be common to all the Danish dominions; but each of these efforts was met by a quiet, yet firm, opposition on the part of the Holsteiners, and an ill-will by degrees grew up between them and their rulers, which was ripened into action by the revolutionary state of Europe in the year 1848.

“The province of Sleswig is, like Holstein, an

independent duchy; but whereas the dukes of Holstein were formerly accustomed to do homage for their duchy to the Emperor of Germany, the Duke of Sleswig paid his homage to the King of Denmark. Holstein was to the King of Denmark what Hanover used to be to the King of England, while Sleswig was in a different position, her Duke owning no feudal superior but himself, in his quality of King of Denmark. There did not seem to be, therefore, any good reason why Sleswig at least might not be thoroughly incorporated with Denmark.

“The duchies of Holstein and Sleswig are separated by the river Eyder, which has generally been considered as the northern boundary of Germany; it was declared to be so by the treaty of the year 1720. But the Eyder is not the limit of the German-speaking population; *that* has spread northwards, and scattered itself over the southern half of the duchy of Sleswig. The greater part of the pure Germans live to the south of the Danevirke, and a mixed race occupy the country between the Danevirke and Flensborg, while the north of the duchy is inhabited by pure Danes.

“The whole population of the duchy is about three hundred thousand, of which number it seems that about two hundred thousand are purely Danish by descent, and speak the Danish lan-

guage alone; while of the remaining hundred thousand, about one-half speak the German language only, and the other half are acquainted with both languages. From these statistics it will be seen that the Danish population is decidedly in a majority in Sleswig, and that it is not much more reasonable for the German minority to endeavour to impose their language and customs upon the whole duchy than it would be for a Gaelic-speaking Highlander to insist upon his language and customs being adopted throughout Great Britain. Nevertheless, such were the pretensions of the German party in 1848. There was no pretext of oppression on the part of Denmark; the malcontents could not say that the Sleswigers were treated unjustly, or even illiberally; but Sleswig contained a German-speaking population, and therefore, said they, it must needs be a part of Germany, and can on no account be allowed to become absorbed in Denmark.

“The late King of Denmark, Frederic VII., came to the throne on the 20th of January, 1848. On taking the reins of government, he declared his intention of carrying out his father's views (of gradually amalgamating the institutions of the duchies with those of Denmark), and at the same time he put forth a constitution, which was to be common to Denmark and the duchy of Sleswig. It was just at this time that the French

Revolution broke out, and was rapidly followed by insurrections in several other states. These were the sparks that kindled the smouldering discontent of the German party in the duchies into open rebellion. They determined to separate themselves entirely from Denmark, and to convert the duchies of Sleswig and Holstein into an independent state, connected with the German Federation; and with this view they set up a provisional government at Kiel on the 24th of March, 1848. They were supported by Prussia and other members of the German Union, and they might have succeeded in their object had the Danes been willing to stand quietly by and see their kingdom dismembered. But such was not the case. It was a bold thing for a little nation, numbering scarcely more than a million and a half of people (without the duchies), to stand out against the forty millions of Germany; but the spirit of the ancient Norsemen still breathes in the modern Danes, and they rose to a man in defence of their country."

"That's just what Englishmen would have done!" muttered Will Jones.

"Oh, I hope they beat the Germans," whispered Charlie Short.

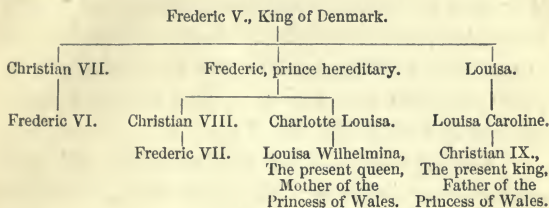
"The war," I continued, "was carried on with varied fortune for a couple of years; then Prussia backed out of it, making a separate peace with

Denmark, and the rest of the Confederates were routed by the Danes in the bloody battle of Idstedt (July 25, 1850), and forced to raise the siege of Fredericstadt (Oct. 5, 1850). This ended the war; and by the treaty of peace that followed, things were restored almost to their former footing. Holstein was acknowledged to be an integral part of Germany, and Sleswig to be a duchy dependent upon Denmark.

“ One painful circumstance connected with the war was, that the German party was joined by two of the king’s nearest relatives, the Dukes of Augustenborg. By this defection of course they lost any claim they might have had to the succession to the throne of Denmark; and as neither Frederic VII. nor his uncle, the heir apparent,* had any children, it was thought advisable to take the opportunity of the general settlement of affairs to appoint an heir presumptive to the throne. With the consent of the Danish Parliament, the king fixed upon Prince Christian, father of the Princess Alexandra. He is lineally descended by the male line from the kings of Denmark and dukes of Holstein, but in the ninth generation; while on the female side he is much nearer to the throne. As his descent may be a matter of interest to you, from his relationship to the Princess of Wales, here is a table of the line

* Prince Ferdinand, since dead.

that connects him most closely with the old royal family of Denmark :—



“ From the above it appears that Christian IX. (who came to the throne on the death of Frederic VII. in November, 1863) is the great-grandson of King Frederic V., and that he married his second cousin, the Princess Louisa Wilhelmina, who is also a great-grandchild of Frederic V.

“ King Christian IX. has six children :—

“ Prince Christian Frederic, born in 1843 ;

“ Alexandra, Princess of Wales, born Dec. 1, 1844, married March 10, 1863 ;

“ Prince William George, born in 1845, and elected King of Greece in 1863 ;

“ The Princess Maria Dagmar, born in 1847 ;

“ The Princess Thyra, born in 1853 ; and

“ Prince Waldemar, born in 1858.

“ But it is time for us to return to Sleswig. The inhabitants of this duchy are distinguished for mildness and benevolence of character, as well as for morality and virtue. They are generally

serious and respectful in manner, upright in principles, and steadily industrious in their habits. The men are broad-shouldered, strong, and robust in the lowlands; while in the higher districts they are neither so wide-chested nor thickset, but are more vigorous and active. The hair and complexion are generally fair.*

“The greater number of the people are employed in agriculture; but there are also sailors and fishermen living on the coasts, and a few manufactures are carried on in the towns, among others, those of cloth-weaving, paper-making, soap-boiling, sugar-refining, and oil-crushing.

“Every Danish artisan and tradesman belongs to the corporation or guild of his craft; and no one is allowed to set himself up as a carpenter, bricklayer, shoemaker, &c., without the leave of the guild he wishes to enter. By this means the trades are prevented from becoming over-crowded, and almost constant work is secured to the members of the guilds.”

“That must be a good plan,” put in Tom Rule.

“It sounds very satisfactory, no doubt,” I continued; “but we must remember that the Danish artisan is subjected to long years of apprenticeship and of journeyman labour at small wages, before he is allowed to become a master workman

* ‘The Danes and the Swedes,’ by C. H. Scott.

at all, and that even then he is kept under strict rules by his guild, which prevent him from starving, it is true, but which are equally powerful to prevent him from pushing ahead in his trade. He may only employ the number of workmen that the masters of his guild think fit to allow him, and he must pay them neither more nor less than the regulation price.

“The most commercial town in the duchy we are speaking of is Flensburg, about twenty miles to the north of the town of Sleswig, and like it, built round the head of one of those beautiful fiords, or inlets of the sea, that add so many charms to the Baltic coasts of Denmark. It is a flourishing place, and the capital of the duchy; but yet in passing through it the English traveller cannot fail to notice the dull look and apparent poverty of the shops, in comparison with what he has been accustomed to see in places of the same size in his own country; and this remark is not applicable to Flensburg only, but also to every other Danish town. It does not arise from any dearth of suitable shop-goods in Denmark, but from the shopping wants of the people there being less than our own. In England, even in country villages, people buy a great deal of their food, and all their clothing, at the shops, or from hawkers; but in Denmark, as I have told you, nearly every peasant grows his own corn and fattens his own

pig ; and then for clothing, his wife and daughters prepare and spin the home-grown flax and wool, and he weaves it into linen and cloth. The town workmen either spin and weave their own clothing or buy it from the country peasants. Anything that they do get from the shops in the way of clothing, as prints, ribbons, &c., costs them nearly double the English price ; but on the other hand, the food-shops are much cheaper than ours, meat, for instance, selling at from threepence to fourpence a pound in the country, and up to sixpence in Copenhagen, butter at eightpence, and other things in proportion.

“ Flensburg boasts of having been the birth-place of many men of note, as, Krock the painter, and Lorch, the first Danish engraver ; but among all her citizens none seems to me more worthy of remembrance than an ancient burgher of whom the following story is told :—

“ It was during the Swedish wars of the seventeenth century, that after a battle in which the enemy had been routed, a burgher of Flensburg was about to refresh himself with a draught of beer from a small wooden bottle, when he heard the cry of a wounded Swede, who fixing his longing eyes on the beverage, exclaimed, ‘ I am thirsty, give me to drink ! ’

“ Now the burgher of Flensburg was a kind

man, and though he suffered greatly himself, he replied at once, 'Thy need is greater than mine,' and, kneeling down by the side of the wounded soldier, he poured the liquor into his mouth.

"But the treacherous Swede, taking advantage of the unarmed state of his benefactor, fired his pistol as he bent down, wounding him in the shoulder.

"Then the burgher sprung upon his legs, and indignant, exclaimed, 'Rascal! I would have befriended you, and you would murder me in return; now will I punish you. I would have given you the whole bottle, but you shall have only half;' and drinking off one-half himself, he gave the remainder to his enemy. When the news of this action came to the ears of King Frederic III. he ordered the burgher into his presence, and asked him, 'Why did you not kill the rascal?'

"'Sire,' replied the man, 'I could never slay a wounded enemy.'

"'Thou meritest to be a noble,' said the king, and he caused him to be created one at once, and gave him for his arms a wooden beer-bottle pierced through with an arrow."*

"Leaving Flensburg for the north, we travel for some miles by the side of the fiord, through

* Marryat's 'Jutland and the Danish Isles.'

a beautiful country, 'here finely wooded, there well cultivated, now gently sloping into lovely valleys, now melting into the mirrored surface of the sea. Hill and dale, wood and grass, the stately beech, the gnarled oak, in combination form the body, while flashing water lights it up and gives it a soul—the soul and body of the beautiful. The taper masts, the flapping sails, the moving vessels on the fiord, the peasants' houses on its shore, the churches' steeples amidst the trees, united make the substance; while the sun's bright rays in light and shade throw over it a spirit—the spirit and the substance of the picturesque.' *

"As we pass through this beautiful country, 'its smiling pastures, its verdant meadows with their quickset hedges, its scattered trees upon the fertile slopes of gentle undulations, call up associations of our own dear land. Nor is this strong resemblance merely accidental. This is Angeln, whence the name of England comes: this is the cradle of our adventurous ancestors the Angli; this the birthplace of those intrepid chiefs Hengist and Horsa.'† You remember how they were invited to come over to our country after the Romans left it.

"The district of Angeln extends about thirty miles, from the fiord of Flensburg to that of

* Scott's 'Danes and Swedes.'

† Ibid.

Apenrade. The English look of this part of the country and its inhabitants, is constantly noticed by travellers.

“And now, if we cross over the peninsula, from the coast of the Baltic to that of the North Sea, we shall find ourselves in another part of Denmark which is said to have sent out its colonists to England. This is Frisia, or Dithmarsh, which lies along the western coast, from the mouth of the Elbe to that of the Eyder, and thence northwards to Jutland. The people of this district retain the tradition of their connection with England, and justify it by the dialect they speak, which comes much nearer to the English language than that which is used in the Danish Isles. They have a couplet that runs,—

“Good bread and good cheese
Is good English and good Friese.”

“Their country is the most fertile part of Denmark, but it is not nearly so pleasing in appearance as the opposite coast. They have none of those beautiful fiords running up into the land and backed by wooded hills, but a flat monotonous shore, with scarcely a harbour that can afford any shelter to shipping from the mouth of the Elbe to the most northern point of Denmark. In fact, from Tonning, on the Eyder, to the Skaw, a distance of three hundred miles, there is

not a single port that can be entered by vessels of any size. The land reminds the traveller of Holland; and like that country, a great deal of it has been reclaimed from the sea, and still requires to be protected by embankments. Occasionally these give way, and then an inundation follows, and the fruits of many years' labour are destroyed.

“The most disastrous event of this kind that has been recorded took place in 1634. ‘On the 12th of October in that year a violent storm of south-west wind had raised a heavy sea, and in the night-time, with a spring tide at its height, the wind suddenly shifted to north-west, and threw such huge breakers on the coast that the sea-dykes gave way, and cattle, corn, horses, and people were overwhelmed. In Eyderstedt district alone, two thousand one hundred and seven persons were drowned, six hundred and four houses demolished, and eighteen thousand head of cattle were lost. In the district of Flusum a thousand people perished, and as many in the district of Tondern; fifteen thousand persons, it was reckoned, perished in that dismal night in both duchies. The island of Nordstrand, of the most extensive and fertile arable and grass land, with twenty-two parish churches, was overflowed, and cut in two by the waves, and six thousand four hundred and eight of its inhabitants were carried off by the waters, two thousand five hun-

dred only escaping. Fifty thousand head of cattle are supposed to have perished.*

“How thankful ought we to be that we live in comparative freedom from such dreadful calamities !”

As soon as I had done speaking, the boys recurred to the subject of the Sleswig-Holstein war, and one and all expressed their joy at the victories of the Danes.

“’Twas no wonder they conquered, for they had the right on their side,” said one.

And another added, “Ay, but was not it a brave thing for them to stand out, two against forty ?”

“The Danes were always a brave nation,” I said, “and famous for their endurance. There are many stories in their history which show how they have contrived to hold out under difficulties, and as one of them is rather amusing, I will relate it to you :—

“A castle in Jutland was once besieged by the Count of Holstein, against whom the garrison defended themselves for many a long and weary month. At length their provisions were almost exhausted, and they had but one sow and a little bread left in the castle. The Count seems to have suspected their condition, for he sent a beggar woman to them morning after morning, to

* Laing’s ‘Denmark and the Duchies.’

ask for food. But the brave Danes had no intention of letting the enemy know the state of their larder, so they gave the beggar a larger bit of bread every time she came. As for the sow, instead of eating her up, they turned her to another use, but you will hardly guess what it was. They took her somewhere near the outside of the castle three times a day, and pinched her till she squeaked; which was of course as much as saying to the enemy, 'We have meat enough in the castle still, and don't intend to give up yet for want of food.' So the Holsteiners understood them to mean; and after watching the castle for some time longer, and finding that all their efforts to tire out the Danes were useless, they raised the siege.

"But if the Danish peasants and common soldiers are thus brave and enduring, we must not forget to notice the gallant spirit in which they are led on by their officers and nobles. Not to mention the Sleswig-Holstein war, in which the devotion of the upper classes to their country was very conspicuous, I will give you one instance of older date.

"Admiral Trolle had spent a long life in the service of his country, when, in 1565, a new war broke out with the Swedes. The admiral immediately prepared to take a part in it; but one of his friends remonstrated with him, saying it was

a pity he should risk his valuable life. Trolle replied, 'If I lose this life I enter another. Do you know why we are called gentlemen, and why we wear chains of gold ; why we possess lordships and expect more respect from others ? It is because we have the satisfaction to see our peasants live in peace, while we, with our king, defend our country. If we wish for what is sweet, we must also taste the bitter.' "

CHAPTER IV.

JUTLAND.

“ WE come now to the largest and most northerly province of Denmark, Jutland, the land of the Jutes. You remember that they were one of the tribes who are said by early historians to have crossed over to England in large numbers; we need not therefore be surprised to find that the dialect spoken in Jutland comes nearer to the English language than that which is used in any other part of Denmark. In other provinces ‘th’ is sounded hard, as ‘t,’ while the Jutlanders give it its full sound. In Denmark generally, ‘w’ is pronounced ‘v,’ but in the mouth of a Jutlander it is the English ‘w.’ Mr. Marryat, while journeying through the province, remarked that the postilion, in talking to his animals, called one of them ‘ole ors,’ and the other ‘mare,’ and that, when he found it necessary to alter a strap in the harness, he turned round to the travellers with the petition, ‘Lend os a scizzors.’ By-and-by the party alighted at a cottage, where they were greeted with the friendly invitation, ‘Will ’ee

drink a glass milk?' and on asking for the key of the church, the direction given them was, 'Go thou to schoolmaster.' We should hardly have expected that races, which have been separated for more than eight hundred years, would have retained so much of a common language; but so it is.

"In travelling northward from Sleswig the first town we come to on the western side of Jutland is Ribe. It is famous in Danish history from its connection with the good Queen Dagmar. She was the daughter of a king of Bohemia, and Waldemar, King of Denmark, hearing of her charms, sent an embassy to ask her hand in marriage. Her parents looked favourably upon the proposal, and the young lady declared herself ready to accompany the ambassadors to Denmark.

" 'Then,' to follow the words of an old Danish ballad, which has been translated by Miss Howitt—

'Then silken stuffs were spread on the ground
And the maid went down to the strand;
She bade good-night to her parents dear,
And the ship put out from land.*

'They hoisted aloft the silken sail
Upon the gilded mast,
And so they came to Denmark
Ere two long months were passed.

* Into the river Elbe, according to the teaching of modern geography.

‘It was the mild Queen Dagmar
That looked out first to land;
And there the King of Denmark
Was riding on the strand.

‘Then took they the lady Dagmar
And lifted her first on land,
And Waldemar, King of Denmark,
Reached forth to her his white hand.

‘And silken stuffs and scarlet
Along the earth were spread,
And Dagmar, with all her ladies,
To Riber house was led.

‘So the wedding was held with pomp and joy
With mirth and bridal cheer,
And King Waldemar and Queen Dagmar
Were each to the other dear.’

“It seems that in those days the peasants were oppressed by a heavy land-tax, known as the plough-tax, from being levied according to the number of ploughs that each farmer kept upon his farm. Queen Dagmar heard of the complaints which were caused by this tax, and, as the ballad I have just quoted from goes on to tell us—

‘Early in the morning,
Before the risen sun,
It was the lady Dagmar
Who craved her morning boon.

‘One boon, my gracious lord, I crave,
Let me not crave in vain—
That you forego the peasants’ plough-tax,
And release each prisoner’s chain.’

“The king granted her petition, and—

‘Great was the joy which Dagmar brought,
Great joy all Denmark thorough!
Both burgher and peasant lived in peace
Without tax or plough-pence sorrow.’

“After a time, however, the plough-tax seems to have been laid on again, and then again—and this time with her dying breath—Queen Dagmar petitioned the king for its removal. Her prayer was heard; and the grateful peasants marked their thankfulness by handing down the memory of their benefactor in ballads, which have survived the deeds they commemorate more than six hundred years, and are popular among the Danes to this hour. Queen Dagmar’s death took place at Ribe, in the year 1212.

“The principal object of interest in Ribe is the cathedral, which is the finest in Jutland. Perhaps, however, that is not saying much, as there is no church in Denmark that is equal in beauty or size to our English cathedrals or large abbey churches. The graceful pointed-arch style of architecture that we call Gothic is almost unknown in Denmark; the churches there are nearly all built in the massive round-arch style that we know by the name of Norman. Many of them, too, are built of brick, or of brick mixed with stone, which, as you know, is not the case with our cathedrals. There is no reason, how-

ever, to ascribe to the Danes any want of desire to do their best in church-building ; style and material are, after all, matters of taste and expediency ; and as to zeal, many an Englishman might take a lesson from an old custom of the Danes, which was, that when a church was going to be built, each peasant in the neighbourhood brought a stone, or a beam, ready cut and carved, as his gift towards the building.

“ In visiting the cathedral of Ribe, or any other Danish church, we shall observe, that for funeral monuments, instead of marble or stone tablets, the Danes often hang a portrait of their deceased relative upon the church walls. In the churchyards, the most common forms of gravestones are crucifixes and square tablets resting on heaps of rocks, with ivy planted round. The graves are oblong mounds of earth, not covered with turf, but with flowers. It is the custom for families to visit the graves of their relations every All Saints’ Day, and at this annual visit, if at no other time, the little garden is sure to be put in order.

“ Two centuries ago the Danes were noted for the extravagant sums of money they spent at their funerals. We are told in ‘ An Account of Denmark as it was in the year 1692,’ that ‘ the bodies of the nobles were frequently preserved for years, waiting until either an opportunity occurred or the funds were procured for giving a befitting fune-

ral.' Coffins in those days were often made of solid silver; there is one still lying in Sleswig cathedral which is so rich in material and in the beauty of its workmanship, that a Jew from Hamburg is said to have lately offered a sum equal to two thousand pounds sterling for it.

"Among the monuments in Ribe cathedral is one to Hans Tausen, the Luther of Denmark. He was a Gray Friar in a Danish monastery, but he travelled to Wittenburg, where he fell in with Luther, and became a convert to his doctrines. On his return he preached the reformed faith in Denmark, and of course brought upon himself the fury of the Romish priests. The Bishop of Viborg called a company of soldiers to his aid, and attempted to seize the heretic; but he was successfully defended by the people. Shortly afterwards, King Frederic I. declared himself in favour of the Reformation, and persecution ceased. The Lutheran form of Protestantism was adopted as the national Church of Denmark, and it remains so to the present day.

"In what respects the Lutherans differ from the Church of England I shall leave you to find out from other sources, merely remarking, that the Danish Church, while retaining the sacred offices of bishop, priest, and deacon, cannot, like ours, connect its Bishops by an unbroken line of succession with the time of the Apostles.

The duties that are generally performed in England by the 'parish clerk,' fall in Denmark to the share of the 'deacon,' and, in the country, this officer very commonly adds the post of village schoolmaster to the duties of his sacred calling.

"For, according to law, every parish must have its schoolmaster in Denmark. He is appointed by a board of commissioners, generally clergymen, who put him through a very strict examination before they allow him to pass; they also take care that his school shall be frequently examined and reported upon. In return for his labour the master enjoys the use of a school-house and of a glebe, which the parishioners are bound to plough for him, together with a salary of from 40*l.* to 100*l.* a year, provided partly by government and partly by the parish. This is good pay, considering the cheapness of living in Denmark; and it shows the importance which the Danes attach to the education of their children.

"Here, again, some of our people might well learn a lesson from the Danes. How sad it is in England to see child after child kept away from school, and allowed to grow up without any attempt being made to teach it the duties it owes to God and man! Such ignorance is rarely found in Denmark. Every child there is carefully sent to school, and made to learn the Church Cate-

chism, reading, writing, and arithmetic; besides which it is generally taught the history of its own country, and a little geography and grammar. The clergyman of the parish usually visits the school once a week, and sees that proper attention is paid to religious instruction; and as the time draws near for the children to be confirmed, he takes them into his own hands, and gives them regular lessons for six or twelve months, or even longer, before he allows them to present themselves to the bishop. Even then the clergyman's ticket does not pass them, but they are carefully examined by the bishop or provost, who rejects them unless they can show that they have a good knowledge both of the Church Catechism and of the Bible.

“The bishop is upheld in this discipline by the government, and by the employers of labour in general. The government does not consider that young people are fit to manage their own affairs, or are come of age, as we call it, until they have been confirmed. And very few Danish masters or mistresses choose to engage a servant who has not received a proper religious education; in hiring one they expect to have a certificate of confirmation brought them, as well as a good character.

“You will want to know whether the Danes are any the better for the careful training they

receive. In inquiring into this matter we must remember that the best effects of a good education are not those which are seen upon the surface; but three facts, which are reported by travellers in Denmark, certainly speak well for the system that is followed there.

“First: There is not so much crime in Denmark, in proportion to its population, as there is in England.

“Secondly: Drunkenness, which was formerly very prevalent there, has been so much lessened of late years that Mr. Laing, who spent some months in the country in 1851, testifies, ‘I have not seen a drunken man in Denmark or the duchies, although I have been living very much in country *kros*, or ale and spirit houses in the villages.’ And Mr. Scott, who was in Denmark during the time of the Sleswig-Holstein war, bears the same witness. ‘Neither in towns, nor in the country,’ he says, ‘did we witness any drunkenness; we *never*, in fact, saw a drunken individual, although we constantly came in contact, during our tour through the islands, with bodies of men collected together in the towns previously to joining the army, taking leave of their friends, or just after having done so.’

“Thirdly: There are but very few parish paupers in Denmark. Each Danish parish or district provides a workhouse for its poor, as with

us, and widows, orphans, and old people are made very comfortable when they take refuge in it; but the number of those who find it necessary to do this is so small, that a penny rate is often sufficient to cover the workhouse expenses for the year.

“The Danish poor-law contains one admirable provision against idleness. When a man who can work and won’t work—such people do now and then turn up in most countries—asks for relief, it is given him, but in the form of bread and water only; upon this he is kept till he comes to a better mind; then he is set to work; but out of his first wages he is made to pay back to the parish officers what they have spent upon him, and until he has done so he is deprived of all his civil rights.

“Mr. Marryat went to see the poorhouse at Ringkioping, a town about fifty miles to the north of Ribe. He found that it was ‘a long one-storied building, divided into good, airy, well-sized rooms, two beds in each. The married people are not separated; in one chamber lay an aged couple, whose united ages must have amounted to well-nigh two centuries, bedridden both, on a sea of feather-beds of exquisite cleanliness. Then there was a work-room, where aged women were busy spinning flax and carding wool; and the kitchen in which they dine together—in

the morning coffee and bread and butter ; for dinner, a soup and one dish of meat ; of an evening, tea and *smor-brod*. A range of hams hung round the ceiling beams.'

" Besides the workhouse, Ribe and many other Danish towns contain comfortable almshouses for the poor.

" But it is time we should continue our journey northwards. Leaving Ribe, we pass through an immense meadow, eight English miles square, without hedge or division of any sort ; this is the town field that was presented to Ribe by King Eric Menved. And now on, on we go for many a weary mile, through a flat uninteresting country. To our left, the land is cultivated and very fertile ; on our right, we have now sandy heath, and now black bog. The Jutland bogs, you must remember, are very useful to the inhabitants, as they supply them with nearly all the fuel they use, and that so cheaply, that a thousand large turfs can be bought in Jutland for half-a-crown. But on the other hand, we must admit that these bogs are sometimes awkward places, as the following story proves :—

" ' In times long, long gone by, the King of Laven, in Jutland, built himself a castle upon the borders of a lake, and there he lived with his fair daughter. The fame of her beauty soon spread abroad, and a neighbouring king came to Laven

castle, and asked her hand in marriage. The maiden's consent was soon won, but the father said he could not do without his only daughter, and therefore he forbade the match. The lovers did not, however, consider themselves bound by his decision; but as the bridegroom was not allowed to visit openly at Laven castle, they determined to resort to stratagem. Accordingly, one evening the gentleman made his way in, disguised as a blind harper, and a few hours later it was discovered that he and the maiden had disappeared together. And now the angry father orders his fleetest horses to be saddled, and he and his servants make hot haste in the pursuit. Presently the lovers are seen in the distance, pushing on as fast as their single horse will carry them. The bridegroom drops his hat, but he does not wait to pick it up. The pursuers gain on him, but he puts spurs to his horse and dashes forward. There is a bog ahead, the pursuers will go round it, but he determines to venture across. Rash decision! The horse plunges in, flounders about for a few steps, then sinks deeper and deeper, till the black oozy waters close upon their prey, and bridegroom and bride are swallowed up by the bog, in the sight of the bereaved king of Laven castle.'

"However, those who keep to the high roads in Denmark are in no danger of falling into bogs,

although they may be almost blinded by the dust.

“What is that we can just see through the driving sand? A gipsy’s tent, surely. Yes, gipsies live pretty much the same life in Denmark that they do in England, and the heathy ground in the centre of Jutland is their favourite camping place. They ply the trade of chimney-sweeping, and are sometimes hired to act as dust-men in the towns.

“And now we come to the kro, where we are to put up for the night. What can that bundle of sticks be, on the top of the roof? It is a stork’s nest; and storks, as well as swallows, are supposed by the Danish peasant to bring luck to the house. The tradition they have about it is as follows:—

“‘It was on that fearful Friday when our Saviour hung in His agony upon the cross, when the sun was turned into blood, and darkness was upon all the earth, that three birds, flying from east to west, passed by the accursed hill of Golgotha. First came the lapwing; and when the bird saw the sight before him he flew round about the cross, crying in his querulous tone, “Piin ham! piin ham!—Torment Him! torment Him!” For this reason the lapwing is for ever accursed, and can never be at rest; it flies round and round its nest, fluttering and uttering a plaintive cry: in the swamp its eggs are stolen.

“ ‘ Then came the stork, and the stork cried in its sorrow and its grief for the ill deed done, “Styrk ham! styrk ham!—Give Him strength! give Him strength!” Therefore is the stork blessed, and wherever it comes it is welcome, and the people love to see it build upon their houses: it is a sacred bird, and for ever unharmed.

“ ‘ Lastly came the swallow, and when it saw what was done, it cried, “Sval ham! sval ham! —Refresh Him! cool Him!” So the swallow is the most beloved of the three, he dwells and builds his nest under the very roofs of men’s houses, he looks into their very windows and watches their doings, and no man disturbs him, either on the palaces or the houses of the poorest peasants.’* ”

“ Before we go into the kro, let us take a look round the farm-yard that belongs to it. We are out of the dairy district now, so we do not find many cows, but there is a herd of young bullocks, and a drove of colts. The Jutland farmer rears great numbers of cattle and horses for exportation. Mr. Marryat inquired at one farm how many horses they kept, and was told eighty-five. Six thousand horses were exported from Jutland to France in one summer, and orders were received for three thousand more.

“ Here is the poultry house. How clean it is

* Marryat’s ‘Jutland and the Danish Isles.’

kept! The hens are sitting on nests made out of a handful of straw doubled over and tied together at one end, and then opened out into a cup-shape. When the girl goes to take the eggs, she leaves five in each nest; because, she says, the hen can count up to five, but no further.

“Now let us go into the kro. This clean, cheerful room, with its window full of flowers, and its loud-ticking clock, is the family sitting-room. That is an old-fashioned spinning-wheel in the corner, and in the room beyond is a loom; for, as I have told you before, the Danish peasants still spin and weave nearly all the clothing they wear. The flax of which they make their linen is grown on their own farms, and the wool, for cloth and worsted, comes from their own sheep. They are generally particular about the cut and finish of their dress, and each district has a costume of its own.

“The holiday dress of the Jutland men consists of a broad-brimmed hat, a long coat of homespun cloth, ornamented with large silver buttons, velvet breeches, and Hessian boots.

“The women in some places wear frilled caps; in others they tie a handkerchief round their heads. In some districts they add to their head-dress a black mask tied over their faces, which gives them a very odd appearance; but it protects them from the flying sand while they are

working in the fields, and of course they take it off in-doors. On common days their upper garment is a linen or cotton jacket, but on Sundays they change it for one of better material, cloth or velvet, with silver ornaments. The skirt is of homespun cloth, blue, green, brown, or red, according to the taste of the wearer or the fashion of the district; in some places it is a tartan plaid.

“ The Danish peasants have not yet learnt to hoop themselves round with crinoline, but they seem to think that the more petticoats they are seen to possess the more respectable will they be thought, and so a girl generally wears the whole of her wardrobe in that line round her waist—five, six, or seven thick homespun cloth petticoats at a time. They tell a story of a certain bride who went to church with thirteen on, and fainted away in consequence. The old women often knit their petticoats; and all the stockings are knitted. The costume used to be completed by *sabots*, that is, wooden shoes, but these are said to be rapidly going out of fashion.

“ And now, here comes our dinner. I wonder what our Jutland hostess will give us? Stewed eels that have been caught in the lake hard by; veal cutlets and potatoes; Randers beer; and for sweets, two favourite Danish dishes—sour cream served up with bread-crumbs and sugar, and *rod-*

grod, which is so good that we are tempted to ask for the receipt. Here it is:—

“ ‘ Take a pint and a half of juice, either raspberry, currant, or cherry, or mixed, and when it boils, add three ounces of ground rice. Let it simmer for twenty minutes, and before taking it off the fire, throw in an ounce of sweet almonds, pounded, and an ounce and a half of isinglass. Pour into a mould, set in cold water, and serve it, when turned out, with thick cream round the dish.’* ”

“ After such a good dinner we shall soon be ready for our beds. This one must surely be meant for a child, it is so short. No, short beds are the fashion in Denmark, you won’t find a longer one in the house. But what is that square pillow that half covers it? Oh, that is the eider-down bed. People here don’t cover themselves up with blankets; you must be content with a pair of sheets and a counterpane, and put the eider-down over your feet or over your shoulders—it is not long enough to cover both; very likely it may tumble off in the night, but never mind, you will be no worse off than your neighbours, and as long as you can keep it over you, you will find it both light and warm.

“ We have managed to get through the night pretty well with it, although it does not

* Marryat’s ‘ Jutland and the Danish Isles.’

seem to us so comfortable as a good pair of blankets.

“ But here is breakfast,—coffee, eggs, butter, and rye-bread,—and as soon as that is despatched we must mount our ‘stuhlwagen’ again, for we have another long ride before us to-day.

“ As we pass on through the corn-fields we cannot fail to notice the large stones that are scattered over them, some as big as a man’s head, some four or five feet long, and some still larger. They are found in all parts of Denmark, but lie more thickly in some places than in others. They are mostly of red or gray granite, a stone which does not belong to the soil of any part of Denmark; the nearest mountains in which it is found are in Norway and Finland. It is thought that these blocks must have been split off from some of them many years ago, and have been carried along by the ice, till they settled down where they now are. We should hardly have thought it possible that the ice, or waters, of the Baltic could have carried such huge stones for several hundred miles, but there are many instances on record which prove that they can do so.

“ In the year 1807, an English vessel, belonging to the Royal Navy, was sunk in Copenhagen Roads. Thirty-seven years afterwards an experienced diver was sent down, to see if anything remained in her that was worth saving. He

found the space between decks covered with blocks of stone of six or eight cubic feet in size, and some of them heaped one upon another. He then told his employers that he had visited many wrecks in the Sound after they had been under water for a few years, and that he had found every one of them strewed over in like manner, with blocks of stone.

“Another thing that will strike us in passing through Jutland is, that we shall often come to earthen mounds—tumuli, or barrows, as they are called—like those that are so common in many parts of England. They are the burial-places of the people of by-gone days. Some of them have been opened, and have been found to contain curious relics of the ancient people; stone knives and hatchets, bronze swords and spear-heads, and gold ornaments. Sometimes these curiosities are picked up in Denmark without disturbing the barrows. A few years ago a man was walking over a bog, when his foot sank into a hole; he pulled it out with some difficulty, and felt something sticking to it, which at first he took to be a snake, but on looking again he found it was a gold neck-ring, such as was worn in former times. He sent it to the Museum of Antiquities in Copenhagen, and was paid five hundred dollars (more than 50*l.*) for it. Again, in 1859, some labourers were sent into a field to dig a hole and bury a

stone, that lay there in the way of the plough. On moving the stone they found three beautiful gold armlets underneath, for each of which the trustees of the Museum paid them three hundred and fifty dollars.

“At the end of a two days’ journey in our *stuhlwagen*, or about ninety miles to the north of Ribe, we come upon another inlet of the Baltic—a much larger one than any we have met with before—the Liimfiord. It extends right across Jutland, from east to west, in a very winding course, and is studded with islands. In former times it was separated from the North Sea by a ridge of sand; but in 1825 the dividing ridge was swept away by a violent storm, and the waters of the Liimfiord found a second outlet. This change of course turned the northern part of Jutland into an island.

“The opening that was made is called the Agger Canal. At one time it was deep enough to allow vessels drawing eight feet of water to pass through; but it seems to be gradually filling up again, for in 1860 the depth of water had decreased to four feet. History tells us that the Agger Canal has been opened and shut several times within the last thousand years.

“A little higher up there was once another opening into the North Sea; and how do you think it came to be shut up?

“ You have discovered by this time that the Danes are great people for traditions, and perhaps also, that the tales they hand down do not always agree with History. Here is what they say about Sjorring Fiord, as the opening I have just mentioned was called :—

“ ‘ There was once a wicked Queen of England who quarrelled with the King of Denmark, and in order to revenge herself upon him, she worked for seven years with seven thousand men, till she had cut open a passage between England and France, and let the waters of the Atlantic through. They came rolling on and on, till they reached the coast of Jutland, where they threw up beds of sand, that covered all the fields near the shore, and stopped up the harbour of Sjorring. “ Never mind,” they add, “ our turn will come in time ; for a prophecy exists that the revolted Danish colony of England will again be some day recovered by a Danish king.” ’

“ The banks of the Liimfiord are generally low, and the country near it is flat, but the water winds so picturesquely round jutting points of land, and between islands, that a passage down the fiord is not without interest. It is navigated by steamboats.

“ Mors, one of the islands in the Liimfiord, is said to have been the birthplace of Hamlet.

“ An uncomfortable windy drive, of forty miles

or so, from the Baltic mouth of the Liimfiord, brings us to the most northern part of Denmark, the Skaw, which is a sandy promontory stretching out into the waters of the Kattegat.

“The little village of Skaw, or Skagen, was originally built upon the west coast; but one day in 1775, while the inhabitants were in church, a storm arose, and brought with it clouds of flying sand, which fell upon the ill-fated village. Fields and houses were buried by it, and the lower part of the church was so quickly and entirely surrounded, that the congregation was forced to escape through the belfry windows. After this misfortune the people of Skagen removed their village to the less fertile but more secure shore, on the eastern side of the promontory.

“The Land’s End is marked by a lighthouse, which is a very necessary addition to the Skaw, as both sides of the coast are very dangerous to shipping, the land being low and not easily seen, and the water shoaled by sandbanks. A great number of vessels are wrecked in the neighbourhood of the Skaw every year. In 1859 ten wrecked vessels were lying close together, their masts rising above the water.

“And now, turning our faces southwards, we pass again through the sandy country to the north of the Liimfiord, and by one of the largest bogs in Jutland, the Vild Mose, which lies to the

north-east of the Fiord ; then, crossing the ferry, we come to the town of Aalborg (Eel-town), the principal port of the Liimfiord.

“ Jutland, as I have already told you, exports cattle to England and horses to France, and besides this, an extensive trade is carried on with Norway, Denmark supplying the Norwegians with corn, which their own country does not grow in sufficient quantity, and taking in return deals for housebuilding.

“ Forty miles to the south of Aalborg, we shall come to Viborg, the capital of Jutland, beautifully situated on a hill-side, overlooking a lake.

“ Some miles further to the south-east is Randers, another flourishing town on the banks of the Guden. This is the only river in Denmark in which salmon are caught ; but they are so plentiful in it, that a law is said to have been made, which provides that no servant in Randers shall be fed upon salmon more than once a week.

“ Ascending the Guden River we come to Silkeborg, famous for its paper manufactory ; and a two hours' drive from Silkeborg will bring us to the top of the Himmelberg, the highest mountain in Denmark. Mountain it is called, although it is only five hundred and fifty feet above the sea, not as high as many an English hill. There is a fine view from the top of it, which will enable us to gain a general idea of the south-eastern part of Jutland.

“First, looking inland, we shall observe the long string of lakes through which the Guden passes ; farm-houses and villages are scattered along their shores, and each cluster of houses is backed by a wood of oak or beech. At our feet lies a bog, sprinkled over with heaps of peat turfs, which have been cut and left to dry in preparation for the winter. Then, turning to the south, we catch a glimpse of the waters of the Belt, sparkling in the distance, and notice how the coast is broken by fiords, such as we have seen in Sleswig, and how a red-roofed town nestles round the end of each fiord—Kolding in the distance, then Veile, then Horsens. Nearer to us, but to the east, lies the city of Aarhus, also on the shores of the Belt. Further to the north you may observe the castle of Katsholm, by which there hangs a tale, with which we will take our leave of Jutland, as our lecture has been long enough for to-night.

“Once upon a time ‘a bad unjust man died, and left his property between his three sons ; but the youngest, who was an honest lad, when he had received his share, said to himself, “What has come with sin must go away with care.” So he determined to put the money to the water ordeal, and cast it into the lake, knowing that what was unjustly got would sink and the rest float. He did so, and one farthing only floated ; with this

farthing he purchased a cat, not far from kittening time, and went by ship to a foreign land, where rats and mice abounded and cats were unknown. There his kittens bore him little cats in their turn ; he sold them, made a large fortune, returned to Jutland, and there built a castle, which he called Katsholm.'''*

* Marryat's 'Jutland and the Danish Isles.'

CHAPTER V.

COPENHAGEN.

“ PEOPLE are not supposed to know much about a country until they have visited its chief town, and therefore I intend in this lecture to give you some account of Copenhagen, the capital of Denmark.

“ A voyage of twelve or fourteen hours in a passenger-steamer will carry us from our last resting-place,—namely, the eastern coast of Jutland,—by the northern shore of Zealand, Denmark’s largest island,—through the Sound, the narrow passage that separates Zealand from Sweden—and into the harbour of Copenhagen, ‘Kiøbenhavn,’ or Merchants’ Haven, as the Danes call it.

“ If our taste is at all like that of other travellers we shall be sure to be pleased with our first view of Copenhagen, that is, with its appearance from the water. The harbour with its shipping in front, the houses of the city rising from the water’s edge, and its tall towers, and spires, and windmills standing out from the background of

trees by which the city is surrounded—form in the whole a charming picture.

“ We shall be glad to examine some of its parts more closely, but before we do so we will follow the advice of experienced travellers, who tell us we ought in the first place to try to gain a general idea of the city. Here is a tall church-tower, from the top of which we may expect it to be spread out before us like a map. So it is; and we see distinctly that Copenhagen is divided into three parts; there is the New Town to the east, the Old Town to the west, to the south of them the harbour, and to the south of that Christianshaven as the third part of the city is called. The Old and New Towns are in Zealand, Christianshaven is built upon the island of Amak, and the channel that separates the two islands is used as the harbour. It has a depth of eighteen feet of water, so that large vessels can be safely brought up to the centre of the city. The convenience of this arrangement is increased by canals, that branch out to the right and left of the harbour, and carry the merchants’ goods to the doors of their warehouses.

“ Copenhagen is not nearly so large as London, for Denmark, as you know, is a much smaller country than England, and therefore it does not require so large a capital. The population of Copenhagen is only one hundred and thirty thou-

sand ; and as to size, five miles, that would only take you in a straight line from one side of London to the other, will carry you round the boundary of Copenhagen. But you may say—how shall we know where the boundary of Copenhagen is? No one can say exactly where London begins or ends. No, but the boundary of Copenhagen is clear enough, for the city is surrounded with fortifications. Perhaps you do not quite understand what I mean.”

“ No, ma’am,” answered several of the boys.

“ I mean, then, that the inhabitants of Copenhagen have found it necessary to protect their city by digging a broad deep ditch or moat all round it, and by throwing up the earth out of this ditch on the town side, in the form of an embankment, or broad earthen wall, which they have finished off and strengthened with masonry. The wall, however, does not take a straight line round the city, but from time to time juts out and then turns in again, forming corners called bastions. From these, in case of a siege, the artillerymen would work the guns for the defence of the city ; but in time of peace the bastions are put to another use, for upon each of them now stands a windmill, turning corn into flour for the benefit of the peaceful inhabitants of Copenhagen.

“ The tops of the embankments, or ramparts, as they are called, are planted with double rows

of lime-trees, under the shade of which runs a broad road, that forms a pleasant walk round the city. The moat below is full of water, and in winter time it makes a capital skating-field for the young citizens.

“ A little beyond the city walls, to the north-east, you may see another fortification, the citadel of Fredericshaven, which is a further protection to the city.

“ You will want to know whether the Danes have ever found occasion to make use of the defences of their capital ; and I am sorry to tell you that, twice since the beginning of the present century, they have had to turn their guns against an English fleet. But I think some of you have read the lives of Nelson and Wellington, and if so, you ought to know a little about the engagements I refer to.

“ Yes,” said Joe Sharp, “ I had the life of Nelson out of the library the other day, and I read about the battle of Copenhagen in it. The Danes would not let us search their ships, as we said we had a right to do in war-time, so we sent a fleet under Sir Hyde Parker and Nelson, to try and bring them to another mind. Nelson led a part of the fleet up to Copenhagen, and attacked the Danes on Good Friday, 1801. They fought so well that for some time it seemed likely they would get the victory, but we were too much for them

at last, and we took or burnt nearly all their ships. Then Nelson sent a message on shore to say, 'The brave Danes are the brothers, and should never be the enemies of the English,' and to ask them to leave off firing. They did so, and soon afterwards they made peace with us."

"Very well," I answered. "I am glad you do not forget what you read about. And what have you to say, Charlie? I lent you the 'Life of Wellington' a little while ago; did you find anything about Copenhagen in it?"

"Yes, ma'am," answered Charlie, "there's a little bit near the beginning. 'Twas before he was called Wellington, while he was Sir Arthur Wellesley, that he was sent to Copenhagen."

Charlie's knowledge did not seem to extend further, so I was obliged to continue. "Our government learnt, in 1807, that the Danish fleet was likely to fall into the hands of Napoleon Bonaparte, who would of course have used it against us. In order to prevent this, we asked the Danes to give up their fleet into our keeping, and when they naturally refused, we sent an army under Lord Cathcart and Sir Arthur Wellesley, and a fleet under Lord Gambier, to attack Copenhagen. The Danes were not so well prepared for war as they had been in 1801, and although they showed great bravery in the defence of their capital, holding out against us during a bombardment of

three days and three nights, they were in the end obliged to submit to our terms.

“The necessity for the bombardment was deeply regretted by our nation at the time it took place, and its remembrance ought to be painful to the minds of Englishmen, for the damage and loss of life that it caused to our ‘brave Danish brothers’ was immense. The first rocket thrown into the city is said to have killed a little girl sitting at work by her bedroom window, and the second to have killed her mother, who was nursing her baby at the street door. Three hundred and five houses were burnt to the ground during the three days, and many others were set on fire and more or less damaged. But let us turn from this sorrowful subject, with the hope that the guns of Englishmen and Danes may never more be pointed against each other.

“And now for another look at the city. Suppose we begin with the island of Amak. At its north-eastern corner, the part nearest the sea, is the royal dockyard, and the station of the Danish navy. Further to the west is the church of Our Saviour, with its peculiar spire, round which a staircase winds on the outside. Then, there is the tall tower of St. Nicholas, used as a station for watchmen, who are kept on the look-out all night, to warn the people of Copenhagen in case of fire. The large market-place close to St.

Nicholas is called the Amager Torv, and is the vegetable market for the city. Those groups of gaily-dressed girls standing by their baskets are Amak peasants, the descendants of some Dutch colonists who were brought over from Holland about three hundred and fifty years ago, to teach the Danes the art of gardening. They still keep themselves distinct from their neighbours, wear their own costume, and speak their own language. They also keep to their original trade, and raise a plentiful supply of vegetables for the Copenhagen market.

“ From the Amager Torv we can cross by a drawbridge to the Old Town. Here the first building we shall notice is the Exchange, with its curious, graceful spire, made out of four bronze dragons, their heads placed downwards, and their bodies twisted together and pointed towards the sky. Following the course of the canal which runs by the Exchange; we soon come to the enormous palace of Christiansborg, six stories high and four hundred feet in length. The canal comes close up to it, for it seems as if no building would be thought complete in Denmark without standing or running water on one side or the other. On the north side of the palace square is the Thorwaldsen Museum; but as we must return to these buildings by-and-by, we will pass them over for the present. A little further on stands

Trinity Church, distinguished by its massive round tower originally built for an observatory. An inclined plane, fourteen feet wide, winds round it inside instead of a staircase, and it is said that when Peter the Great of Russia was staying in Copenhagen, he drove his empress to the top of the tower in a carriage and four. Travellers say that it would be quite possible to drive up, but that coming down would be the difficulty, as there is no room to turn a carriage at the top."

Will Jones. "Maybe they took off their leaders, and backed down."

Tom Rule. "I think they had better have taken out all the horses, and had some men to let it down."

Joe Sharp. "Perhaps the emperor did not care what became of his carriage after he had got it up. Such a great man could soon get another, I should think."

"History does not tell us," I continued, "what became of the carriage, so each of you has a right to his own conjecture. But to go on with the city. A little more to the west is the Frue Kirk (Our Lady's Church), the Cathedral of Copenhagen. It is the successor of one that was destroyed in the bombardment of 1807, so we must not say too much about its bare brick walls and plain oblong shape. Close beside it stands another building, more famous for use than beauty ;

it is the University, where eleven hundred Danish youths are receiving an excellent education.

“ Besides this institution there are many admirable schools in Copenhagen, for, as I have told you, the Danes are very careful about the education of their children. No doubt it is in consequence of this that there are many instances in Danish history of people having risen from a humble station in life to positions of eminence. I have not time to mention many of them, but while we pass along the brick wall of the University, I will give you two or three examples.

“ The celebrated Admiral Wessel, or Thordenskiold, began life as a tailor’s apprentice, and rose to command a Danish fleet in his twenty-sixth year.

“ Holberg, a famous Danish historian and dramatic writer, after he had passed his examinations at the University of Copenhagen, set out on his travels through Europe, with a flute, and less than six pounds of money, in his pocket. By the time he reached Amsterdam his money was reduced to fourteen shillings, but he found a resource in his flute, which he would play at the peasants’ doors of an evening, and thus earn a supper and a night’s lodging. In this humble manner he travelled through France, Germany, and Holland; then he crossed over to England, where he found some employment in teaching; but he was still so

poor that the undergraduates of Oxford proposed making a collection for him. However, he declined their help, and returned to Denmark, where in the end he became famous as a writer, and was raised to the rank of baron. He died a rich man, and left his money as an endowment to a school for the sons of Danish nobles.

“ Then again there was Thorwaldsen, the great sculptor. He was the son of a man who gained his livelihood by carving figure-heads and other ornaments for ships. His parents sent him to the free drawing classes connected with the Academy of Arts in Copenhagen, when he was only eleven years old. After studying for some time, he gained the first prize, which was a travelling studentship. The history of his struggles with poverty, and of how success came to him at last, is very interesting, and I shall hope to tell you more about him another time. But at present we will return to our survey of the Old Town.

“ Its streets are crooked and narrow, and their pavement very bad ; but at least we have plenty of room to pick our way, for there is none of that bustle that we are accustomed to in London. The fact is, that Copenhagen is not a place of great trade, and there are no manufactories of any extent within the city ; indeed the only notable one is the government manufactory of china.

“ The shops contain plenty of the necessities

of life, but are not very full of its luxuries. These are not in much demand in Copenhagen, for the Danes are, as I have tried to make you understand, a plain-living people—few of them are what we should consider badly off, but on the other hand, few of them are rich; there is scarcely any one in the country who cannot provide himself with a good coat of homespun cloth, but there are very few ladies' wardrobes full of silk dresses and lace mantles. What the Copenhagen ladies and peasants' wives do spend their money upon, when they have any to spare, is jewellery; not the trumpery sixpenny brooches and rings that our girls buy on a fair day, but real substantial gold and silver brooches and clasps, which are worked up very tastefully by the jewellers in Copenhagen, as may be seen by the display in their shops.

“Other shops that attract the notice of strangers in Copenhagen are the furriers'. They generally ornament their windows with stuffed figures of the animals whose skins they sell, and among them are several kinds that do not often appear in the English market. For instance, they have the white fox of the north; the Greenland fox, with its fur of a bluish hue powdered with white, and the dark gray Norwegian squirrel. But the eider duck is the staple of a Danish furrier; its down stuffs the square beds that

Danes and Germans are so fond of covering themselves up with ; its breast is made into children's muffs, and large blankets are formed by whole skins being sewn together. The Danish furriers make very pretty patchwork carpets and stool-covers, out of the chippings of different sorts of skins.

“ The principal shopping street of Copenhagen is the Oster Gade, or East Street, so named from the direction in which it runs ; it ends in an open place, called the Kongens Ny Torv, or the King's New Market. This is one of the largest squares in Copenhagen, and from it twelve streets branch out into as many different quarters of the city. We will take one of them leading into the New Town, which is the fashionable part of Copenhagen. The streets in it are wider and straighter than those in the Old Town, and the houses are more often covered with stucco. They are not stone, for you may remember I have told you there is hardly any building stone to be found in Denmark, so that even the churches and palaces have to be built of red brick.

“ The houses in Copenhagen are generally large, but very few people have one to themselves ; most families are contented with a floor or flat, as they are in Edinburgh and Paris.

“ The Amalien Gade in the New Town contains the modest palace in which the Princess Alexandra was born, and in which her parents

lived till their accession to the throne. This street opens into the Amalienborg Platz, a square formed by four palaces, one on each side, and all four alike or nearly so. They were built by four noblemen in the last century; now, one of them is inhabited by the Prince and Princess William of Hesse-Cassel—the grandparents of the Princess Alexandra—another by the Queen Dowager of Denmark, while the two others are used as Government Offices. A little further to the north we come to the large castle or palace of Rosenborg, surrounded by its gardens, which are open to the public. In this quarter, too, is a fine hospital for the sick; and not far from it, the eastern gate of the city.

“ You would like to know what is to be seen beyond the fortifications. I will tell you. First, not far from the east gate there is the citadel; beyond that, to the north-east, are the waters of the Sound; and along the shore runs a fine broad road, planted with trees that make it a very pleasant place to walk in. Further inland, but beyond the citadel, a good many pretty country houses are scattered about, on the borders of an extensive wood called the Deer Park. Outside the north gate is the principal cemetery, laid out like a garden. Further to the west comes the suburb of Vesterbro, and a handsome avenue of limes and chestnuts, leading to the railway station.

On one side of the avenue you may see the tea-gardens—in which the citizens of Copenhagen spend as much time as the people of Kiel; on the other side is a large theatre, which furnishes them with entertainment for their winter evenings.

“ I told you, in a former lecture, that the Danes have no religious scruples about going to the play, which they look upon as a harmless, if not a profitable, amusement. But then they are very careful—more so than any other people—to insist that every actor and actress engaged in their theatres shall be a person of respectability; so that when they take their families to a play, it is in full confidence that nothing will be brought before them that would be improper for Christian men and women to see or hear.

“ And now that we have finished our survey of the city and its neighbourhood, I should like to give you a short account of one or two of the museums for which Copenhagen is famous. They are all open to the public, and the Danish peasants are frequent visitors to them.

“ We will begin with the Thorwaldsen Museum—which was built after the death of the sculptor in 1844, and contains all his models and sketches (in clay, plaster, or on paper), as well as casts from all his marble statues. His life's work is represented here, and visitors are enabled to trace the gradual progress of each of his famous statues

—how the idea as it first struck him was sketched out on paper, and how one improvement after another occurred to him, as he fashioned his working models in clay; till, at last, they look upon the completion of his idea in the finished marble—or more likely in a cast from it—the marble itself being probably in some foreign country, as England or Russia.

“The tomb of the sculptor is in the court of the museum, and around it are several small rooms fitted up exactly like those in which Thorwaldsen spent his last days. ‘You may imagine yourself,’ says Mr. Marryat, ‘in the *salon* of the artist himself. Here are arranged his furniture, his pictures as they existed in his lifetime, his tables, chairs, his very inkstand. Protected by a glass case stands the model of a head of Luther, finished, on which the sculptor worked the very day of his death. Against the walls hangs his last sketch. . . . There is something solemn and touching in this finale to our wanderings [through the museum]; it brings the sculptor home to your mind, and I have always observed that visitors leave this chamber somewhat quiet and subdued, speak little when there, and in a voice half whisper.’

“One of Thorwaldsen’s finest works is in the Frue Kirk, which you will remember is the cathedral of Copenhagen. It consists of figures,

larger than life, of our Lord and His twelve Apostles. They are placed at the east end of the church, our Lord in the centre, and six Apostles on either side. There is St. John, beautiful and holy, writing his gospel from inspiration; St. James, in his palmer's hat and staff, ready to go forth on his mission to 'preach the gospel to every creature;' St. Peter, with his keys; and St. Paul, in place of Judas Iscariot. Our Lord stands behind the altar, dignified, yet benign; 'mild and exquisitely beautiful in countenance, He extends His arms to those who seek consolation, and appears as though He were pronouncing the Divine words—"Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." '*

"Other works of Thorwaldsen's are found in the Christiansborg Palace, that huge building close to the Thorwaldsen Museum. You must not think it is useless because it is ugly. On the contrary, it contains a great deal that is worth seeing. First of all there are the state apartments of the royal family, and the Riddersaal, or Knights' Hall, which is said to be the largest room in Europe. Then there is the Royal Chapel; the Royal Picture Gallery; and the Royal Library, containing four hundred thousand volumes. And besides all these, the palace houses one of

* Marryat's 'Jutland and the Danish Isles.'

the most interesting museums in Copenhagen, that of Northern Antiquities.

“ I have told you that curious weapons and ornaments are often picked up in the fields in Denmark. A great number of these have been brought together and carefully arranged in this museum, so as to form quite a history of the ancient inhabitants of the country. It seems that in very old times the people of Denmark were as barbarous as the savage tribes of Africa and Melanesia. They did not understand the use of metals, but made their knives and axes and arrow-heads of flint. A great many of these weapons are to be seen in the museum, classed under the Age of Stone. Next comes the Age of Bronze, when men learnt to work in copper and tin, and used gold for ornaments. Still they were without iron, which does not appear till the third, or Iron Age. The authorities of the museum tell us that they believe iron to have been introduced into Denmark in the fifth century, and they consider the Iron Age to have lasted till the introduction of Christianity among their ancestors, in the ninth century.

“ The later, or Christian remains, are classed by themselves, and it is among them that the Dagmar Cross is placed. Perhaps you may have heard that an exact imitation of this cross formed the wedding present that the Princess Alexandra

received from King Frederic VII. I have already given you a part of the history of Queen Dagmar, so that I hope you will feel some interest in her cross. It was given her by King Walde-mar when she asked her 'morning boon'—the removal of the plough-tax; and after her death it was laid in the grave with her. Some years ago, her tomb, at Ringsted in Zealand, was opened, and then it was taken out and brought to this museum. It is supposed to have been the work of an eastern artist, and is remarkable as being the earliest enamel that is known to exist. Queen Dagmar died in 1212, and therefore the cross is, at least, somewhat more than six hundred and fifty years old. It is about an inch and a half long, and is enamelled on one side with the figure of our Lord upon the cross, and on the other with portraits of the Blessed Virgin and four other saints. A piece of the wood of our Lord's cross—or what was thought to be so—is believed to have been enclosed in it.

“And now, having brought down the memorials of Old Denmark to comparatively modern times, let us turn once more to the history of the day, by stepping from the Museum of Northern Antiquities into another part of the Palace of Christiansborg, in which the meetings of the Danish parliament are held.

“There was a time, not far back, when the

Danes had no National Assembly worthy of the name of Parliament; they were governed by an absolute monarch, whose word was law. But the late king, Frederic VII., granted them a constitution, and they now enjoy as much freedom as any nation in Europe. Law is well and speedily administered among them, and they have one institution that is well worthy of notice; it is called the Court of Reconciliation.

“ When a man wants to go to law with his neighbour, before he is allowed to bring his cause to the judge he is obliged to take it to a commissioner, whose special business it is to try and reconcile the two parties. The commissioner hears both sides of the case, without allowing any lawyer to be called in, and then gives his advice as to how the quarrel should be settled. In this manner many tiresome and expensive lawsuits are prevented, and better justice is obtained than in the settlement of the following case:—

“ It was some time before Courts of Reconciliation were introduced into Denmark, that a landlord and a landlady quarrelled about the ownership of a field. After the dispute had lasted a long while, the landlady promised a compromise. Let me, said she, sow the next crop in the field, and till that has ripened the field shall be mine; but as soon as the harvest of what I shall sow is reaped, I will give the field up to

you. The landlord agreed ; and the lady forthwith put her seed into the ground. And what do you think she sowed ? Not wheat, nor clover, but beech-mast ! And the wood that sprang from her seed was standing a few years since.

“ But to return to Copenhagen ; — we may finish our review of the city and its curiosities with some notice of the Castle of Rosenborg. This palace, like that of Christiansborg, is too large to be conveniently used as a place of residence, even for royalty, so the kings of Denmark have given it up for a Museum of valuables and curiosities connected with the History of Denmark. There are many remarkable things to be seen in it, and some of them seem to show that the Danish kings, of a few generations back, were very extravagant in the money they spent in ornaments. For example : here is a wonderful set of horse-trappings, not made of leather, nor even of velvet or of cloth of gold, but glittering all over with pearls and precious stones of immense value. These costly housings were a wedding present from Christian IV. to his eldest son.

“ Here also are specimens of ancient drinking-cups, of a size that has, happily, gone quite out of fashion in modern times. One of them, made of silver gilt, is two feet high, and is modelled in the form of a horse ; the body being intended to hold the liquor, which can only be drunk by

taking off the head. This horse was given to a Danish king by the city of Hamburg. Another gigantic silver cup is celebrated for its beautiful workmanship, and has the likeness of a German castle chased upon it.

“ The principal room in every Danish palace is called the Ridder Saal, that is, the Knight's Hall. That of Rosenborg contains the ivory coronation chair of the kings of Denmark.

“ In another room the crown jewels are kept, together with three silver lions, larger than life. These, I should tell you, are the emblems, or arms, of Denmark, and it is the custom to carry them in all royal processions: when a king dies, they are taken to his funeral; when his successor is crowned, they appear again.

“ Other rooms in the Castle of Rosenborg are hung round with royal portraits, and among them are likenesses of several English princesses, who became at different times queens of Denmark; for the marriage that has lately caused so much rejoicing in England is by no means the first that has taken place between the royal families of Great Britain and Denmark. Perhaps you would like to know what others history tells us of. To begin, then, with times long past:—Shakspeare tells us that the Danish prince, Hamlet, was married to an English princess. A little later, Queen Thyra, the builder of the Danevirke, is

said to have been brought from England to become the wife of King Gorm the Old. She was a queen of whom England may be proud, for she gained the love of her subjects so completely, that they gave her the surname of Danebod, the Pride of the Danes. Then in the eleventh century, as perhaps you may remember, Canute the Great, the first of the three Danish kings of England, married Emma, the widow of the Saxon king, Ethelred the Unready.

“ Oh, yes,” said Joe Sharp, “ we read about that the other night, and Emma was the mother of Hardicanute, who reigned in England after his half-brother Harold.”

“ Yes,” I answered, “ you are right. I am afraid that the conduct of Harold and Hardicanute did not raise the character of the Danes in the opinion of the English nation ; at any rate after their deaths I am not aware that any intermarriage took place between the royal families of the two countries for nearly four hundred years ; but in 1406, Philippa, the daughter of Henry IV. of England, became the wife of Eric, King of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. She was as much beloved by her people as Thyra Danebod had been ; and she had the opportunity of doing them a great service ; for while her husband was away in another part of his dominions, Copenhagen was suddenly attacked by a strong body of pirates.

Philippa took the defence of the city upon herself, and acted so skilfully and bravely that the pirates were driven away with great loss. They had made so sure of success that they had brought with them casks of salt, which they intended to use in salting down the cattle for which Zealand is famous.

“ Nearly two hundred years after the time of Philippa, King James VI. of Scotland (who afterwards reigned in England as James I.) asked for the hand of the Danish princess, Anne. She consented to become his bride, and set out for her new country. But there were no steamboats in those days, to make their way against wind and tide, and the royal fleet was driven by stress of weather into a Norwegian harbour. Meanwhile James was anxiously expecting his bride, and when week after week had passed away without bringing her into port, he gallantly determined to go in search of her himself. He found her in the harbour where she had taken refuge, and there he married her; then he took her on to Copenhagen, where he paid a visit, some months in length, to the royal family of Denmark.

“ And now we come to the time of the English Queen Anne: do you remember whom she married? ”

Joe Sharp. “ I think it was Prince George of Denmark.”

“ Yes, you are right ; he was a quiet, well-meaning man, without much character.

“ The next intermarriage between the two royal families was in the days of George II., whose daughter Louise became the wife of Frederic V. of Denmark. She died in her youth, but not before she had gained the character of being as good as she was beautiful. Even now the Danish peasants tell one another of her kind deeds, and remark, ‘ It was a sad day for Denmark when she died.’

“ The marriage that will close our list is not, I am sorry to say, a pleasant one to dwell upon. It is that of Caroline Matilda, the sister of George III., with Christian VII. of Denmark. She was only fifteen when she was married ; he was much older, and moreover, a few years after their marriage he became imbecile. Unfortunately for them both, he was surrounded by unprincipled advisers, who had their own reasons for wishing to get rid of the queen. They poisoned her husband’s mind against her, and so excited his jealousy that, in a fit of half-madness, the weak-minded king ordered her to be instantly arrested. She was seized in the middle of the night, hurried, only half dressed, into a carriage, and carried off to the fortress of Kronborg, where she was kept a close prisoner till her brother sent a fleet to demand her release. He provided a residence for her at Zell in Hanover, but she only

survived her trouble for three years, and died at the early age of twenty-three.

“ Some of the pictures in the Rosenborg gallery recall events that were ludicrous rather than melancholy. For instance, one relating to the coronation of Frederic IV., represents a negro boy holding a large mastiff by a chain. It is said that the king was so fond of this dog that he would not part from it even during his coronation. The dog was brought into the cathedral, and given into the charge of a negro page, with orders that he should on no account leave go of its chain. But the poor boy soon became dazzled by the splendour of the scene before him, and the chain dropped out of his hands. The service proceeded quietly till the archbishop came forward to place the crown upon the king's head, when the dog, evidently thinking that some harm was intended, rushed to the throne, placed his fore-paws on his master's knees, and growled defiance at the archbishop. It was not without trouble that King Frederic succeeded in quieting the dog, and inducing the archbishop to continue the coronation.

“ Rosenborg Castle also contains many memorials of its builder, Christian IV., a favourite monarch of the Danes. Their national anthem refers to a sea-fight in which he commanded his own fleet.”

‘O sea ! the fires of Wessel clave
 Thy death-smoke dread ;
Here to thy bosom fled the brave ;
Round him flashed terror and the grave ;
The ramparts heard the roar which drave
 Through death-smoke dread ;
From Denmark thundered Tordenschild,
To heaven for aid they all appealed,
 And fled.

‘Thou Danish path of fame and might,
 O gloomy sea !
Receive thy friend, who for the right
Dares danger face in death’s despite,
Proudly as thou the tempest’s might,
 O gloomy sea !
And lead me on, though storms may rave,
Through strife and victory to my grave,
 With thee !’ ”

Charlie Short. “ I should not like to change our ‘ God save the Queen ’ for such words as those.”

“ No, indeed,” said I, “ the spirit in them is very different ; and though we may admire the daring bravery of the Danes, we cannot but notice the want of religious tone in their national anthem. What a contrast is their gloomy address to the sea, to the beautiful words that have been handed down to us, as the expression of what ought to be the feeling and prayer of every Englishman—

‘ On Thee our hopes we fix,
God save us all ! ’ ”

CHAPTER VI.

THE DANISH ISLES.

“ IF you look on the map of Europe you will see a group of islands lying between continental Denmark and Sweden ; these are what are meant by the Danish Isles. Zealand and Funen, the two largest of them, lie to the north ; while the south part of the group consists of a chain of islets, of which Langeland, Lolland, Falster, and Moen are the principal. You will see Copenhagen, that I have already described to you, marked in Zealand.

“ But before telling you much about the islands themselves, I have a few words to say upon the sea that surrounds them ; so now look at the map once more. These islands are just at the mouth of the Baltic, to which they leave only three narrow entrances—the Sound, between the coasts of Sweden and Zealand ; the Great Belt, between Zealand and Funen ; and the Little Belt, between Funen on one side and Jutland and Sleswig on the other. Every vessel that enters or leaves the Baltic must pass through one or other of these entrances, but the Sound is the one most fre-

quented by foreign shipping; about a hundred vessels a day pass through it during the summer months, and nearly twenty thousand in the course of a year. Every one of these vessels was formerly stopped, and made to pay toll, at the Danish fortress of Kronborg, but the 'Sound dues' have lately been put an end to. The navigation of the Sound is very difficult, from the shallows with which it abounds: large vessels can pass through it, but not without careful pilotage. Nelson, who took this route in 1801, is said to have been almost worn out with fatigue and anxiety by the time he reached Copenhagen.

"The narrowest part of the Sound is almost at its entrance, between the Danish town of Elsinore and the Swedish one of Helsingborg, where it is only two miles and a half wide. The scenery of its shores has been sketched as follows by a modern traveller:—

"On entering the Sound from the north, the bold steep rocks of Kullen Point, crowned with a lighthouse, and hills of a high and dark appearance are seen on the Swedish side. In the same direction at night the horizon glows with the fires of adjoining coal-pits. The coast soon becomes low to the south, and is of moderate height at Helsingborg, beyond which it remains cliffy, but loses all character of elevation, and is entirely destitute of wood.

“ ‘The Danish side of the channel is of greater interest and more pleasing aspect. Its low shores descend in light green slopes to the water’s edge, and with few exceptions are adorned with beech-woods all the way to Copenhagen.’* ”

“ The middle passage into the Baltic, or the Great Belt, is the broadest of the three entrances, varying in width from eight to twenty miles. Its navigation is as difficult as that of the Sound, but it has a greater average depth of water, and for that reason it was chosen by the French and English admirals in the late war with Russia, as the passage by which their fleets should enter the Baltic.

“ The Little Belt is the narrowest of the three straits, the least frequented, and the most dangerous, owing to the strong current which runs through it from south to north. At its narrowest part it is not broader than a wide river, but towards the south it opens out to a width of ten miles.

“ The coast scenery of the two Belts, and among the little isles to the south of them, is said to be particularly pleasing. ‘There is no bold scenery, but it is often picturesque, and eminently beautiful with tolerable summer weather. Striking blendings of land, water, and sky are to be

* ‘The Baltic, its Gates, Shores, and Cities,’ by Milner.

seen in almost every direction, while the white sails of merchantmen, the boats of pilots and fishermen, rich meadows and noble beech-woods, neat churches, windmills, and homesteads, give variety and life to the landscape. Vegetation is everywhere luxuriant, and long retains a vernal appearance, owing to the humidity of the atmosphere and of the soil. When the plains of Germany are brown and ashy with the summer heat, the isles of Denmark delight the eye with a fresh bright green; and as truly deserve the title of *emerald* as our sister kingdom.*

“Another characteristic of Danish landscape is its soft, smooth, gracefully curved outline. Native writers take this as the type of their national scenery, and appropriately call their country ‘the Land of the White-necked Swan.’

“It is natural that the people of this sea-girt land, whose very doors, so to speak, are washed by the waves, should be good seamen, and accordingly we find that the first mention history makes of the Danes is to record their prowess on the waters. I dare say you may have read stories of some of the Danish or Norwegian *vikings*, as their sea-captains were called; at any rate, a good deal has been handed down to us about them, and it is believed that their ships were roaming over the sea, from the stormy coasts of

* Milner’s ‘Baltic, its Gates, Shores, and Cities.’

the North Cape to the sunny shores of Spain and Italy, at a time when the inhabitants of our island were contented with launching their wicker boats on lakes and rivers. So fond were these *vikings* of the sea, that, it is said, when one of them felt his last hour approach, he would beg his friends to carry him on board his favourite vessel; then, with his own hands, he would set fire to the ship, and await his chosen death with calmness. This was of course in heathen times; Christianity taught them better things, and after the days of St. Anscar, this and their other heathen customs were gradually laid aside.

“From the eleventh century, we hear nothing more of the plundering expeditions of the *vikings*; but the Danes still retained their love of the sea, and in later times they have shown their prowess in many a sea-fight with the Swede; while in the mercantile marine their sailors still bear a high character. Their vessels trade with their own colonies in Iceland, Greenland, and the West Indies; take a part in the northern whale and seal fisheries; bring their own corn and cattle to England; fetch deal from Norway; and obtain, besides, a good deal of employment as carriers for other nations, particularly in the Mediterranean trade.

“Nearer home, a considerable number of the population of Jutland and the Isles are employed

as fishermen. The waters in which they chiefly ply their trade, the Baltic and its inlets, are not nearly so salt as those of the ocean, and therefore their fish are not exactly like those of the English coasts. Cod, haddock, whiting, herrings, are all found, but they are much smaller than our own. The Baltic herring, or stromming as it is generally called, is about the size of our sprat. Flat fish, such as flounders, plaice, &c., that like brackish water, grow large and thrive in the Baltic.

“I have told you that Denmark is colder than England during the winter. This difference of climate is marked by the fringe of ice that gathers round the Danish shores every year, preventing vessels from putting out to sea for about three months out of the twelve. We have no such break in the navigation round our own shores; but then we must remember that fresh water freezes more quickly than salt, and that this fact partly accounts for the great quantity of ice that is found in the Baltic.

“Spring comes to the Danes later than it does to us, but when once it arrives leaves and flowers come out more rapidly. May and June are beautiful months; then comes a hot summer, broken by fogs and showers. By the end of October the weather has become decidedly raw and chilly, and soon afterwards winter begins to close in.

“Neither Jutland nor the Danish Isles possess any mines or quarries of metals or minerals; at least the only exception is in Bornholm, an island in the Baltic that belongs to Denmark, but can hardly be said to form one of the Danish group. There coal is found, and blue marble, but neither is worked to any great extent. The occupations of the people of the Danish Isles are, therefore, principally agriculture, fishing, and the manufacture of their own clothes, and of the simple household articles required for their own use.

“There are many large farms in the islands, but perhaps, on the whole, the farms are smaller than in the continental part of Denmark, and the buildings are not always placed under one roof. Cattle, horses, corn, and rape-seed are exported from the islands, as well as from the other provinces. Funen, which means the beautiful, is celebrated for its fertility, and Moen for the romantic scenery of its caves and chalk cliffs.

“The people in all the islands are well off and comfortably housed, and every country cottage has a little flower plot belonging to it. What a pity it is that some of you English lads do not take a little more pains with your gardens! There is nothing that travellers in Denmark notice with more pleasure than the love of the Danes for flowers: they tell how pretty their cottages look with honeysuckles and roses climbing up them;

how their windows are set off with carnations and balsams ; and how soon they felt at home in the inns where the landladies had ornamented their rooms with sweet-smelling nosegays.

“ The Danes are usually about a middle height ; ‘ they seldom have marked features, but are generally well-looking, with fair hair and clear blue eyes. The Islanders are not so strongly made as the Jutlanders, for although of about the same height, their frames are less compact. They are mild in disposition, steady, persevering, and industrious, but not energetic in their habits.’* ”

“ ‘ The gift of the Dane,’ says a native writer, ‘ is strength. He is susceptible of high, strong, and enduring feelings, but he is not easily roused ; he has more common sense than wit, and being of a patient disposition looks at every side of a question, and requires much time for deliberation.’ He is generally clean, honest, sober, kind-hearted, and hospitable according to his means. ‘ We shall always remember with pleasure,’ says one traveller, ‘ the numerous instances where individuals went out of their way to do acts of kindness for us that were uncalled for, and the more conspicuous when coming, as they did, from strangers on whom we had not the slightest claim.’† ”

“ The same writer speaks also of their polite-

* Scott’s ‘ Danes and Swedes.’

† Ibid.

ness, which, he says, 'is not a mere conventional manner, derived from education, but that desire to oblige which is born of the kindlier feelings of our nature, and springs alone from the generous impulses of the heart. We have never come in contact with any other people possessing this characteristic in so high a degree.'

"Do you not think that some of us might take a lesson from the Danes on this subject? I should be sorry to believe that the English people are wanting in good feeling and real kindness of heart, but I am afraid we often forget, or don't choose to give ourselves the trouble to show our good-will in those little acts that form what is called 'politeness.' So, at least, foreigners who have visited England, very generally say of us. It is a pity, is it not, that we should get a bad character through want of a little care?

"That is one cause of our want of politeness; but perhaps, too, a part of it springs from another source, for I fancy that some of our English lads think they are showing their 'manliness' by putting on a little roughness of manner. I should like these young men to observe, that the Danes, who are as free and brave a people as ourselves, do not agree with them, but take care to be polite, even to strangers. They choose a much better way of showing their self-respect, namely, by keeping themselves and their families off the

parish. As their wages are low, and they are subject to misfortune in the way of illness, &c., as much as other folk, this can only be done by a good deal of prudent care and forethought; and here, again, the Danes show themselves superior to some of our English workpeople.

“When a young Dane finds a girl who pleases him, and who consents to become his bride, they are solemnly and openly engaged, ‘betrothed,’ as the Danes call it, but they do not think of marrying till they have laid by enough to enable them to start comfortably in life. They often wait for several years after they are betrothed, in order to find a comfortable cottage, and get together a good stock of furniture, bedding, and clothes before they marry; and the consequence is, as I have said, that by beginning prudently they are able to live in comfort and keep off the parish to the end of their days.

“I have one other observation to make on the Danish peasant, and it is this: That however prosperous and contented he may be now, things have not always gone well with him. A hundred years ago he was a dependent serf, and as miserable, poor, and discontented as any English pauper. And what has brought about the change in his condition? Principally, as it seems to me, two things: first, the freedom that has been given him; and secondly, the education he has

received. One has raised him from a state of hopeless dependence ; the other has taught him how to use and keep his newly-gained self-respect. Now Englishmen, as we know, have long enjoyed the liberty that is new to the Dane ; and as for education, it has certainly been brought of late years within the reach of all of us. Let me beg each of you to consider what a difference there might be in our cottage homes, how much less misery, and pauperism, and beggary, if Englishmen could be brought to make the same use of their liberty and means of education that the Danes have of theirs, and to imitate the Danish virtues of prudence, sobriety, and self-respect.

“ But I dare say you are beginning to think that the polite and prudent Dane must be a very dull fellow. You would not think so if you could see him, or hear him tell a party of his comrades some of the old legends or fairy tales that are the delight of every Danish peasant. No education that he receives seems to shake his belief in mermaids, and trolles, and nisses, and he is full of stories about them.”

“ Oh, please, ma'am,” put in one of the boys, “ do let us hear some of them.”

“ I will tell you one or two,” I answered, “ but you must remember that they are superstitions, and not truths. The nisses, according to the

Danes, are little spirits who attach themselves to a particular village or farm-house, sometimes living in the farmer's loft, sometimes on his bridge. They do not want much food ; but three times a year, at Christmas, Easter, and on Midsummer Day, the farmer's wife takes care to put some little pots of porridge outside the door for them. In return for this kindness they are supposed to do many good offices for the family, to drive away other nisses who may happen to have taken a fancy to the farmer's corn, and to keep constant watch and ward over his property. There is but one inmate of the house with whom they can never agree, and that is the watch-dog. The farmer's wife, however, has occasionally to find fault with them, for now and then it happens that her dairy-women churn and churn away on butter-making mornings, but no butter will come. How is this, think you? 'Oh,' say the Danes, 'the nisses have sucked all the butter out of the milk.'

"To set against this mischievous trick, you must know that the nisses sometimes give the farmer substantial help, as in the following instance :—

" 'A great many years ago there came a heavy fall of snow ; it lay so thick upon the ground that no one could leave the house. [Now on a certain farm] the cattle were all safely housed in the farm-buildings, with the exception of six calves,

who were lodged in a shed, in a field some way off. After a fortnight's imprisonment the thaw came, and the farm-labourers set forth to remove, as they imagined, the frozen remains of the starved animals. Great was their surprise to find the little creatures not only alive, but grown fat and flourishing, their stalls clean and well swept. The nisses had taken care of them during the fortnight the snow lay upon the ground.*

“The trolles are said to be little people something like the nisses, only more mischievous; but they, too, can do their friends a good turn, and they are always forward in the defence of their country.

“‘The last time,’ says Mr. Marryat, ‘the trolles appeared in public was in the years ’48, ’49, ’50, at the time of the Sleswig-Holstein rebellion. All united Germany was down upon Denmark, and she had lately suffered some reverses—men’s hearts were sad—when one morning a ship arrived at the little town of Rönne. The sailors related how, as they passed the cliffs of Bornholm by night, they had seen hundreds and thousands of the trolles busy doing military exercise on the heights, already prepared to rise in the defence of their native country. “Hurrah! hurrah!” exclaimed the people; “the trolles are out; the trolles are up; no fear of conquest now;

* Marryat’s ‘Jutland and the Danish Isles.’

the victory will be ours ; hurrah ! hurrah !” and they were at once wild with joy and delight.’

“So much for the trolles ! Then the Danes tell of the mermaid, half woman, half fish, who lives in the sea ; of the night-raven, who comes out of the most dismal swamps ; and of the basilisk, an ugly monster, who kills people by only looking at them.

“Besides stories of this sort, the Danes are full of legends that savour of the marvellous. One of them bears the useful lesson that it is better for us to be in God’s hands than in our own. It is as follows :—

“ ‘ Once upon a time there lived in the island of Falster a very rich woman, who had no children. She wished to make a pious use of her fortune, so she built a beautiful church with it. When the church was consecrated, she entered it in great state, knelt down before the altar, and begged of God that she might be allowed to live as long as her church remained standing. Her prayer was granted. Friend after friend passed before her to the grave, but she lived on. War, and famine, and pestilence, mowed down the inhabitants of her island—but she lived on. The last friend of her youth died ; her friends’ children grew old and died—but she lived on. But when she asked for life she had forgotten to ask for youth, and God only granted her the letter of

her prayer. So she grew old, and lame, and blind, and deaf, and her life became a burden to her. At last she said to her servants, "Put me into an oaken coffin, and carry me into my church, that I may see if I cannot die there." And they did as she bade them ; but their mistress did not die, she only grew more and more feeble. At length she lost her speech ; but it came back to her for an hour once a year, at Christmas-time. Every year, at that particular hour, the parson used to lift up the lid of her coffin, and she would sit up, and ask him if her church was still standing. When he said it was, she murmured the words, "Would to God it were destroyed, that there might be an end to my misery." And then, sinking back into her coffin, the lid was closed upon her for another year.'

"I will give you one more legend, and then we must return to real life. One of the most famous Danish heroes is named Holger: the Danes tell the same story of him that the Germans do of their emperor, Frederic Barbarossa. It is thus related by the historian Thiele :—'For many ages the din of arms was now and then heard in the vaults beneath the castle of Kronborg. No man knew the cause, and there was not in all the land a man bold enough to descend into the vaults. At last a slave who had forfeited his life, was told that his crime should be forgiven if he could bring

intelligence of what he found in the vaults. He went down, and came to a large iron door, which opened of itself when he knocked. He found himself in a deep vault. In the centre of the ceiling hung a lamp, which was nearly burnt out; and below stood a huge stone table, round which some steel-clad warriors sat, resting their heads on their arms, which they had laid crossways. He who sat at the head of the table then rose up. It was Holger the Dane. But when he raised his head from his arms, the stone table burst right in twain, for his beard had grown through it. "Give me thy hand," said he to the slave. The slave durst not give him his hand, but put forth an iron bar, which Holger indented with his fingers. At last he let go his hold, muttering, "It is well! I am glad that there are yet *men* in Denmark.'"

"If ever his country should be in dire distress, Holger, it is said, will come out from his dismal vault, and fight its battles with his enchanted sword, and mounted on his good steed Papillon.

"The fortress of Kronborg, to which this tradition belongs, and which is memorable also as having been the place of Queen Caroline Matilda's imprisonment, is situated upon the coast of Zealand, about twenty-four miles north of Copenhagen. It is a square sandstone building, surrounded by ramparts and ornamented with four

towers, and looks extremely well from the water ; but its chief glory is the view from its ramparts. A traveller who visited it one summer's evening, says :—

“ ‘ It was indeed a scene of surpassing beauty ; one that, I believe, cannot be witnessed in any other part of Europe. Beneath lay the Sound, like a broad still river, gradually widening to the right and left ; innumerable vessels, which had come both from the Cattegat and the Baltic with light west winds, were now becalmed, and stood motionless upon the liquid plain, every ship imaged in the water as distinctly as if it had been propped upon a mirror. The sails of some few were set, if haply they might catch a breath of air to bring them into good anchorage. Many boats were still skimming among the vessels, their dripping oars flashing silver at every stroke. Across rose the rocky coast of Sweden, every object upon it distinctly visible ; while on the Danish side the island of Zealand lay stretched like a garden in all the luxuriance of mature summer, and beneath the soft light of an August sunset.’* ”

“ Poor Caroline Matilda is said to have spent many an hour of her captivity at Kronborg in gazing on this view.

* ‘ A Journey through Norway, Sweden, and Denmark,’ by Derwent Conway.

“The town of Elsinore, adjoining Kronborg, is said by Shakspeare to have witnessed some of Hamlet’s most tragic adventures, and a little mound near the town is pointed out to strangers as Hamlet’s tomb; but as I told you in speaking about Jutland, Danish historians believe that Shakspeare has used a little poetical licence in his version of the tale, and that the true Hamlet’s castle was on an island in the Liimfiord.

“A few miles south of Elsinore is Fredericsborg, the most splendid of all the Danish palaces. It is built in a truly Danish position, on three little islets in the middle of a lake. The islets, which are joined by bridges, are completely covered by the buildings, so that the walls seem to rise out of the water. The palace is built of red brick with stone copings, and is an admirable specimen of what is called the Renaissance style of architecture, that is, the style that was used in England about the time of Queen Elizabeth, and that is often called from her, Elizabethan. The varied outline of Fredericsborg—presenting here a turret, there an oriel window, here a spire, and there a gable—is eminently picturesque; but the most celebrated lions of the palace were its carved ceilings, its gallery of historical portraits, and the splendid ornaments of its chapel and riddersaal. These, I am sorry to say, are no more. A disastrous fire that broke out on the 17th of De-

cember, 1859, burnt down the finest part of the palace; its exterior has been restored by the voluntary contributions of the Danish people, but its lost art treasures can never be replaced.

“Fredericsborg is about twenty miles to the north of Copenhagen. On the same side of the city, but much nearer it, just beyond the Deer Park in fact, the traveller may notice a plain and not very large gentleman’s house. This is Bernstorf Palace, so called after its builder, the benevolent Count Bernstorf, who was the first Danish nobleman to raise the condition of the peasantry on his estate, by freeing them from their serfdom. But the chief point of interest about Bernstorf Palace to us is, that it is the country seat in which the Princess Alexandra used to spend the summer months during her early years. Here it was that she first enjoyed the pleasures of a country life, wandering among the noble beech-woods of the Deer Park, admiring the beautiful views of the Sound that lay at her feet, with its bright waters and passing ships, and interesting herself in the hopes and fears, the joys and sorrows of the peasantry on her father’s estate.

“They learnt to appreciate her gentle and benevolent disposition long before it was known to us, and when she was about to leave them, they came to wish her ‘God speed,’ bringing

with them a farewell offering of a porcelain vase. Since that day the Princess of Wales has received many a royal and a costly gift, but we venture to say, that few of her wedding presents will bear a higher value in the eyes of the English people than the porcelain vase, that tells of the love and respect their Princess won in her early days, from the peasantry of her native land.

“And now, having but a few minutes more to spend over the Danish Isles, suppose we employ them in tracing the route of the Princess in her journey towards England. Starting from the railway station at Copenhagen, she crossed the island of Zealand from east to west, making a short stop at the two principal stations on the road, namely Roeskilde and Ringsted. No places could have been more appropriate for recalling to her mind the ancient history and legends of her people.

“Roeskilde was formerly the capital of Denmark, a distinction it did not lose till the middle of the fifteenth century. It is built upon the banks of a fiord that is famous in old Danish story. I give it you as one more specimen of what the simple-minded peasants still believe. The legend states, that once upon a time there lived in Roeskilde Fiord a horrible sea-monster, ‘who ravaged the country, feeding on mariners and young maidens.’ Every means that the in-

habitants could think of, were tried, to destroy him or drive him away, but without the slightest effect. At last some one suggested that a holy relic might be of use, and the head of St. Lucius the martyr was procured from Rome. With fear and trembling the inhabitants carried it down to the shore, and leaving it there, retreated, to watch its effect upon the monster. But he did not come; the very news of its arrival had been enough for him, and from that time Roeskilde Fiord has been freed from his presence. Of course St. Lucius was taken as the patron saint of Roeskilde.

“The cathedral, dedicated to him, owes its origin to an English bishop, William by name, who lived not far from the time of Canute the Great. Bishop William was a man whose name deserves to be handed down with honour, as one who set an example to his generation, of fearing God rather than man.

“Soon after the cathedral was built, King Sweyn, the nephew of Canute, took offence at the jesting words of some of his courtiers, and ordered them to be instantly put to death, though they were then attending mass in the cathedral. The morning after the bloody deed, King Sweyn signified his intention of coming to high mass, but Bishop William met him at the cathedral door, and laying his crozier across the entrance, forbade

him to pass over it, declaring that his presence would pollute the house of God. The king's attendants drew their swords, and would have acted the part of Thomas à Becket's murderers, had not the king himself prevented them. The bishop's fearless conduct had touched his conscience, and, retiring mournfully to his palace, he wept and prayed, clothed himself in sackcloth, and fasted for three days. Then he returned to the cathedral, still in the garb of mourning, and stood humbly at the gateway, till he was met by the bishop. William received him this time with open arms, heard his confession, and restored him to full communion with the Church.

“From this time the king and the bishop were the greatest friends, and William is said to have declared that he could never survive his master. One day the news arrived at Roeskilde that the king was dead, and that his corpse was on its way to the cathedral. The bishop ordered two graves to be prepared, and then set out to meet the funeral procession. As it approached, he knelt down, and crossed his hands upon his breast; and when his attendants went to raise him up he was dead.

“Besides the graves of Bishop William and King Sweyn, Roeskilde cathedral contains the tombs of the monarchs who have reigned in Denmark during the last four hundred and fifty

years, from Margaret, Queen of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, who died in 1412, to the father of the late king: some of the monuments erected to their memory are of great beauty.

"In old books Roeskilde is found written as Rothschild, and under this form it has given a name to the eminent Jewish family so called, whose ancestors emigrated from Denmark in the eighteenth century.

"The abbey church of Ringsted is smaller than the cathedral of Roeskilde, but it contains the tombs of twenty of the earlier kings and queens of Denmark. Roeskilde has sometimes been called the Windsor, and Ringsted the Westminster Abbey, of Denmark. Among the crowned heads that lie in Ringsted are Waldemar the Victorious and his two wives, Dagmar the Good, and Bengerd the Bad. A few years ago their tombs were opened, and it was then that the Dagmar cross was taken from the neck of the good queen. As for Bengerd, when her coffin was opened, a large round stone was found in the place of her head, which the people, in their hatred of her misdeeds, had cut off after her death. The peasants, down to the last generation, were accustomed to mark their love of the good queen and their detestation of the bad by a curious custom. On entering the abbey church of Ringsted, they would drop on one knee and

murmur a prayer at the tomb of Dagmar, and then rising with a 'God bless you, good queen!' they would turn to the other side, and spit upon the stone that covers the remains of the wicked Bengerd.

"But to return to the route of the Princess. From Ringsted the royal train passed on to the railway terminus at Korsøer, the western port of Zealand, where the good steamship Slesvig was in waiting, to convey the bridal party across the waters of the Belt to Kiel. There they again entered the train, and crossed the Duchy of Holstein to Altona, the last town in the Danish dominions. And at this point, where the Princess took leave of her fatherland, so will we, wishing her all joy and blessing in her adopted home, and her native country peace and prosperity for her sake.

"In conclusion, boys, I have to express my regret that, from not having been in Denmark myself, I have been unable to place some of its features before you as vividly as I should have liked. I hope, however, that what I have been able to glean on your behalf from the books of many travellers, will at least have had the effect of giving you some idea of Denmark and its people, and of exciting your interest in a country which, to use the words of one of our ablest statesmen, 'is a small country, but a country

with the most resolute, determined, honest, and honourable population. She is a country,' continued Lord Derby, 'in which there is a large, perhaps the largest, amount of personal and political freedom of any country in Europe next to our own; and she is a country, moreover, well disposed to England. Whatever interruption of our friendship there may have been from time to time, we may hope that a tie recently formed may connect us still more closely together. She has interests, feelings, and affections with this country, and small as she is, yet the character of her people, her great power in comparison with her population, and her geographical position on the map of Europe, in case of a European war, would render her an important ally even for England.'"*

When I had finished speaking, Tom Rule was deputed by the class to thank me for what I had told them about Denmark; and as the lads went out of the room, not one of them forgot to give me a bow and a "Good-night," in a manner which made me think they had more or less taken to heart my hint about politeness. It did not weigh heavily upon their spirits, however, for as soon as they were outside I heard them break out into the well-known chorus:—

* Lord Derby's speech in the House of Lords, May 15th, 1863, in a debate upon the Sleswig-Holstein question.

“God save Prince Christian’s daughter,
Prince Albert Edward’s bride ;
The Danish flag and England’s
Henceforth float side by side.

“To her, that lovely Princess,
We look with pride and joy ;
May never sorrow darken,
Nor fate those hopes destroy.

“Then let the prayer re-echo,
Among our hills and dales ;
God bless fair Alexandra !
God bless the Prince of Wales !”

THE END.

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